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THE

HISTORY

OF

FRANCE,

FROM THE ACCESSION OF

HENRY THE THIRD,

TO THE DEATH OF

LOUIS THE FOURTEENTH.

PRECEDED BY

A VIEW

OF THE

CIVIL, MILITARY, AND POLITICAL

STATE OF EUROPE,

BETWEEN THE MIDDLE, AND THE CLOSE,
OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

BY

NATHANIEL WILLIAM WRAXALL.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

FRANCE.

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The Reign of HENRY THE THIRD.

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Review of the French hiſtory, from the death of Francis the Firſt, to that of Charles the Ninth.—Aſpect of France, at the latter period.—Situation of the court, the capital, and the provinces, in 1574.*—Regency, and meaſures of Catherine of Medicis—Execution of Montgomery.—Flight of Henry the Third, from Poland.—His reception at Vienna, Venice, and Turin—Affairs of France.—Journey of the court to Lyons.—Political intrigues at Turin.—Return of Henry, and his entry into France.*

THE French monarchy, from the period of the expulſion of the Engliſh, under Charles the Seventh, and the ſubſequent re-union of the great fiefs to the crown, was, for near a century, in a ſtate of conſtant progreſſion and advancement. The

CHAP. I.

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successful irruptions of Charles the Eighth, and Louis the Twelfth, into Italy; and the conquests, made by those princes, beyond the Alps, however transitory, evinced how formidable France might soon become to the repose of Europe. Francis the First, with inferior forces, maintained a long, and almost perpetual conflict, during his whole reign, against the head of the empire, supported by the veteran bands of Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands. The compact and collected nature of his dominions; their happy position, in the center of his enemy's possessions; and the facility with which, from the extent of his prerogative, he could draw supplies from his subjects: these circumstances enabled him to balance, and even to limit, the unwieldy greatness of the house of Austria. Notwithstanding the defeat of Pavia, and the numerous disgraces or calamities experienced at various times, during his reign, which were principally owing to his negligence, profusion, or misconduct; he left the kingdom, at his decease, rich, flourishing, and capable of the greatest external exertions (1).

State of France, under Francis the First.

1547.

1552. Reign of Henry the Second.

The eastern frontier was extended and strengthened under his successor, Henry the Second, by the acquisition of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, dismembered from the German empire; and their capture was rendered peculiarly memorable by the siege which Francis, duke of Guise, sustained against the emperor, Charles the Fifth, in person. The victory of St. Quintin, where the constable Montmorenci, with the flower of the French nobility, fell into the hands of Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy; and which, if it had been improved, might have subverted the monarchy of France itself; was, in a great measure, rendered ineffectual by the procrastination, delays, and inaptitude of Philip the Second for con-

1553.

1557.

(1) Mezerai, passim.

ducting

ducting military affairs. The recal of the duke of Guiſe from Italy, not only diſſipated the general conſternation; but, diffuſed univerſal ſatisfaction, by the vigorous and ſucceſsful attack of Calais, which the incapacity of Mary, queen of England, had expoſed to danger. That valuable conqueſt was retained at the final treaty of peace, which ſoon afterwards took place between the two crowns of France and Spain: nor was even the evacuation and reſtitution of Savoy and Piedmont, ſo long occupied by the French arms, unaccompanied with advantage; as it precluded a renewal of the ruinous and expenſive expeditions for the recovery of Naples and the Milaneſe, which, for more than ſixty years, from the reign of Charles the Eighth, to that of Henry the Second, had impoveriſhed, and exhauſted the kingdom (2). CHAP. I. 1558. January.

The premature and tragical death of Henry, which happened in the midſt of the feſtivities conſequent on the termination of thewar, by a ſplinter from the count of Montgomery's lance, may be regarded as the æra, from whence we date the calamities of France. His ſon, and ſucceſſor, Francis the Second, though he had paſſed the age, at which the French monarchs were declared to be no longer in their minority; was, from inexperience, as well as from the very limited nature of his capacity, unequal to conducting in perſon the machine of government. Under theſe circumſtances, the adminiſtration was rather aſſumed by, than delegated to, the duke of Guiſe, and cardinal of Lorrain; whoſe proximity of blood to Mary, the young queen of France and Scotland, ſuſtained by their talents, ambition, and enterprize, enabled them to ſurmount all oppoſition. The unpopularity of their meaſures; their deſcent from, and alliance with, the houſe of Lorrain, which July. Acceſſion of Francis the Second.

(2) De Thou, Mezerai, paſſim.

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might be regarded as foreign, if not hoſtile to the French intereſts; and more than either, the intemperate and perſecuting ſpirit, evinced towards thefollowers of the reformed religion, who were numerous and powerful: theſe combined cauſes, operating on minds, already heated by controverſy, produced the famous conſpiracy of Amboiſe. Its object was, in ſome degree, equivocal and unaſcertained: but, the Guiſes, confounding any attempt to ſubvert their own authority, with the crime of treaſon, ſeverely puniſhed its authors, and diſplayed the full extent of royal, and miniſterial vengeance, in the executions which followed. Intoxicated with proſperity, and ſtimulated by motives of perſonal ſafety, they determined to proſecute with equal rigor, the concealed abettors of the enterprize. Louis, prince of Condé, was juſtly regarded as ſuch; and his high quality, which allied him to the crown, formed no protection againſt the machinations of his enemies. Seduced by aſſurances of ſecurity, to attend the convocation of the ſtates-general at Orleans, he was ſeized, impriſoned, and, after a trial deſtitute even of the formalities of juſtice, he was ſentenced to an immediate death. Anthony, king of Navarre, his elder brother, and firſt prince of the blood, whoſe more flexible and yielding character rendered him leſs an object of apprehenſion, was detained in confinement. But, at this critical moment, the ſudden death of the young king, Francis, reſcued the prince of Condé from his impending danger, and opened a new ſcene in France (3).

Conſpiracy of Amboiſe.

1560. March.

1560.

December. Death of Francis the Second.

1561. Charles the Ninth.

A minority, in name, as well as in effect, took place. Charles the Ninth, who ſucceeded to the throne, was ſtill in his childhood, and it became indiſpenſable to nominate a regent. Catherine of Medicis, the queen mother, who had hitherto re-

Regency of Catherine of Medicis.

(3) Mezerai, De Thou, Davila.

mained

mained in a ſtate of comparative obſcurity; availing herſelf with promptitude and addreſs of the conſternation of the Guiſes, of the depreſſion of the princes of the blood, and of the abſence or diſgrace of the conſtable Montmorenci; procured her own elevation to the regency. If the rectitude of her intentions had equalled the extent and verſatility of her talents, it is probable, that her adminiſtration might have been equally pacific, and beneficial to the kingdom. But, regardleſs of veracity and honor, ſhe ſubſtituted artifice and diſſimulation in their ſtead; while, only intent on the preſervation and prolongation of her own authority, ſhe ſacrificed to it the great intereſts of the ſtate and monarchy. Incapable of cruſhing, or of coërcing by force the various factions, ſhe attempted to divide them, and to render herſelf the common arbitreſs: but, the effort exceeded her ſtrength, and the object eluded her graſp. The Guiſes, recovered from their firſt aſtoniſhment, and ſupported by their own intrepidity, formed a coalition with their antient rival, the conſtable, whoſe zeal for the ſupport of the Catholic religion prompted him to bury in oblivion all paſt animoſities. Marſhal St. André, one of the moſt powerful noblemen of the court, joined the confederacy; and France, like antient Rome, ſaw a triumvirate, in title as well as reality, form itſelf in her own boſom. The king of Navarre, fluctuating in his opinions, religious and political; allured by the ſpecious and illuſory promiſes of the Guiſes; and jealous of his brother's ſuperior conſideration, lent his aid to the triumvirs. Superior to all controul, they no longer obſerved even the forms of deference, or ſubmiſſion to the regent; and Catherine, deſtitute of any other reſource, embraced the dangerous expedient of calling to her aid the prince of Condé, who, with the admiral Coligni, commanded the forces of the Hugonots (4).

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Syſtem of her adminiſtration.

1561.

Factions in the court.

(4) Davila, p. 430. De Thou, Mezerai.

From

CHAP. I.

From this fatal measure originated the dissensions, by which France was long afflicted and desolated. Three civil wars, each more fiercely contested than the preceding one, extinguished all loyalty, obedience, or veneration for the laws. In their progress, the principal actors were swept off by various species of violent and premature death. The king of Navarre was killed by a ball, in the trenches before Rouen. St. André perished at the battle of Dreux; and the duke of Guise himself, who, with some defects of character, must ever be ranked among the most exalted and illustrious persons of the age, expired by the hand of an assassin, under the walls of Orleans. Montmorenci, at near fourscore years of age, fell, covered with honorable wounds, in the action at St. Denis; while the prince of Condé was put to death on the field of Jarnac, rather by deliberate assassination, than by the chance of war.

1562. Commencement of the civil wars.

1562. November.

December.

1563. February.

1567. November.

Catherine still survived among the ruins of the monarchy, and had placed her second son, Henry, duke of Anjou, for whom she early betrayed the fondest predilection, at the head of the royal armies, destined to exterminate the Hugonots. But, that party, far from being extinguished by the loss of their leader, seemed to acquire new vigor, under the guidance of the celebrated Coligni. A fourth battle, at Montcontour, in which the arms of Charles the Ninth were completely victorious, did not terminate the contest. Supported by his own resources, Coligni, after struggling with impediments, only to be surmounted by men who fight for their religious freedom, re-appeared in the ensuing year, at the head of a formidable body of forces; repulsed the troops sent to impede his progress; and even threatened to transfer the theatre of war to the vicinity of the capital (5).

1569. March. Duke of Anjou, placed at the head of the army.

October.

(5) Mezerai, passim. De Thou, Davila, D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ.

In

In such a situation, peace became not only eligible, but indispensable. It was concluded soon afterwards, and the conditions were highly favorable to the Hugonots (6). The measures of the court appeared to have undergone a total change, and to breathe conciliation. Coligni was invited to repair to the royal presence; and Charles affected to listen with eagerness and pleasure, to his exhortations of employing the fiery and turbulent spirits, with which the kingdom abounded, in foreign expeditions of national glory, or advantage. The marriage of the young prince of Navarre, with Margaret, sister to the king, was already settled; and every circumstance seemed to ensure a long continuance of tranquillity. These fallacious appearances preceded, and eventually terminated in the massacre of Paris: an event, which, whether we regard it as the joint act of Charles and Catherine his mother; as the separate machination of the queen herself; or, as produced only by adventitious causes, unconnected with any deliberate system of perfidy; stands equally alone, as the most flagitious and detestable violation of faith and humanity, commemorated in the annals of mankind. Its consequences, nevertheless, were not such, as might naturally have been expected. The security, supineness, and inactivity of the government, allowed the Hugonots leisure to recover from their first consternation. Despair furnished them with arms; and Rochelle ventured to shut its gates against the forces of the Crown. Henry, duke of Anjou, after a long and fruitless siege, was compelled to withdraw his troops from the place; and esteemed himself fortunate, that his election to the crown of Poland afforded him an honorable pretext for abandoning the enterprize. France was desolated by a fourth civil war; and the mutual animosity, manifested in

CHAP. I.

1570. Auguſt. Concluſion of peace.

1572. Auguſt. Maſſacre of Paris.

1572.

Siege of Rochelle.

1573. June.

(6) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 49 and 50.

the

CHAP. I. the courſe of it, bore a proportion to the circumſtances by which it had been produced (7).

1573. Election of the duke of Anjou to the crown of Poland.

The ambitious mind of Catherine of Medicis, perpetually occupied in viſionary ſchemes for the elevation of her children, had profited of the extinction of the race of Jagellon, to procure the Poliſh Crown for her favourite ſon, Henry. The levity and venality of the Poles; the political intrigues of Montluc, the French embaſſador; and the reputation which the duke of Anjou had acquired for military ſkill and valor, by his victories over the Hugonots; combined to produce the unexpected ſucceſs with which the attempt was accompanied. But, the new monarch did not betray the ſame alacrity to take poſſeſſion of his dominions, which he had manifeſted in their purſuit and attainment. The extenſive power annexed to his quality of lieutenant general of France; the pleaſures of a licentious court; and the proſpect of the ſucceſſion itſelf, which Charles's ſtate of declining health rendered probable: all theſe motives tended to retard his departure. The interpoſition, and even the menaces of the king, his brother, were requiſite to propel and vanquiſh the reluctance of Henry (8).

October.

1574. New commotions in France.

His abſence was far from reſtoring a calm; and the concluſion of the reign of Charles the Ninth was marked with the ſame commotions, which had characterized its commencement and progreſs. The duke of Alençon, youngeſt of the four ſons of Henry the Second, and whoſe youth had excluded him from any participation in the counſels which led on the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew; expreſſed the warmeſt affection for the admiral Coligni, and the utmoſt indignation at his unmerited fate. Anxious to occupy the ſituation of lieutenant-general, left vacant by the king of Poland's election, and finding his demands

(7) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 105. De Thou, vol. vi. p. 664. Davila, p. 390—3.

(8) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 104—112.

eluded,

eluded, he projected to effect his escape, and to put himself at the head of the Protestants. He was to have been accompanied in his flight by the king of Navarre, who, after having been, not without long debates, excepted from the general carnage of his friends and followers, was, since that period, detained as a captive, together with his cousin, the prince of Condé. The irresolution of the duke of Alençon proved fatal to the enterprize, and conducted his adherents to the scaffold; while Charles the Ninth, after long struggling with a distemper, which the vigor of his constitution enabled him to resist, but, not to surmount; terminated his life and reign, in the flower of his age (9). CHAP. I. 1574. Death of Charles the Ninth. May.

The aspect of France at the time of his decease, was widely different from the appearance which it exhibited under Henry the Second. In the interval of only fifteen years, the manners of the kingdom had suffered a complete alteration. The generous spirit of chivalry, characteristic of the age of Francis the First, and of which courtesy and humanity were the inseparable attendants, no longer existed. The people, habituated to scenes of civil war, were rendered ferocious and sanguinary. Almost all the arts, which tend to soften and polish society, were buried in the general confusion. Manufactures and industry languished; while commerce, become precarious, from the insecurity of the coasts, and hazardous, on account of the piracies which infested the narrow seas, annually diminished. Even agriculture, so indispensable to the existence of every state, was faintly and imperfectly carried on; while the peasants, plundered and massacred by a licentious soldiery, had neither any security for the possession of their lives, nor for the enjoyment of their property. Bands of foreign mercenaries, with Aspect of France, at that period. Anarchy, and insurrections.

(9) Mezerai, vol. ix. 124. Davila, 407. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 63.

which

CHAP. I.

which France was inundated, compleated the general desolation. Elizabeth, queen of England, whose generosity was always under the guidance of her policy, had early sent assistance to the prince of Condé; and had received from him the important town of Havre de Grace, at the mouth of the Seine, as a security for her repayment. The united efforts of the Catholics and Hugonots, had afterwards ejected her from the possession: but, her fleets continued to infest the coast of Normandy, to throw supplies of arms and provisions into Rochelle, and to molest the general trade of the kingdom. Philip the Second, king of Spain, whose zeal for the support of the Romish faith and church, served as a mark to conceal his purposes of interest and ambition, sent repeatedly supplies of troops to the aid of Charles; but, only attentive to prolong the calamities of France, and to avert the storm from his provinces in the Netherlands, he withdrew them, before they could render any effectual service to the royal cause.

1574. Conduct of Elizabeth.

Of Philip the Second.

Switzerland, for near a century, since the reign of Louis the Eleventh, had constantly raised a body of stipendiaries, which was maintained by the French kings. To their fidelity, Charles the Ninth owed the preservation of his liberty, if not of his crown, at the famous retreat from Meaux to Paris; and in the battle of Dreux, their valor had not a little contributed to the victory, finally obtained over the Hugonots. The sovereign pontiffs, deeply interested in the contest between the adherents of the two religions, had unlocked the treasury of St. Peter, and dispatched not only pecuniary, but, military support, to the eldest son of the church. But, it was from Germany, the fruitful nurse of soldiers in the sixteenth century, that the most inexhaustible supplies of men were furnished. While the princes of Saxony, attached to the Catholic party,

Of the Switzers.

Of the popes.

Of the Germans.

party, aided the crown; the elector palatine, not less zealously devoted to the doctrines and followers of the Reformation, sent a numerous army to the assistance of Condé and Coligni. The Landskenets and Reitres composed a principal part of the forces on either side; and, though numbers perished in the repeated conflicts, the survivors returned to their native country, loaded with the spoils, and enriched by the treasures of France (10). CHAP. I. 1574.

Policy and measures of the queen dowager.

These calamities, great in themselves, were not diminished, nor alleviated, by the probable prospect of any immediate, or beneficial change. The maxims and policy of Catherine of Medicis, which had plunged the kingdom into such accumulated distress, continued still to operate in all their force. That authority, which she had exercised during the minority of the late king, she retained after its termination, though no longer invested with the title of Regent. Her vast and capacious mind, fertile in the arts of destruction, had planned, matured, and executed, the massacre of Paris. The remorse, which Charles the Ninth felt from his reflections on it, heightened by his resentment at Catherine's predilection for her second son, Henry, had not only conduced to make him withdraw from her his confidence, but, even to menace her with the effects of his indignation. The progress of disease, and the diminution of his intellectual and bodily strength, as he approached the end of life, had effaced, or weakened, these unfavourable impressions. His apprehension of the duke of Alençon's design to impede the return of the king of Poland, and to infringe the order of succession, had even induced him, in his last moments, not without manifest signs of reluctance, to entrust the government to his mother, and to delegate to her the regency.

(10) De Thou, D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. Davila, Mezerai, passim.

Those,

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Thoſe, who looked forward to futurity, anticipated with regret and apprehenſion, the augmentation of her influence, under the reign of a prince, who had always received from her, and evinced towards her, the ſtrongeſt marks of reciprocal affection (11).

Duke of Alençon.

Francis, duke of Alençon, youngeſt of the four ſons of Henry the Second, had not hitherto exhibited any endowments of diſpoſition or character, which could juſtly excite the hopes, or awaken the expectations of his countrymen. Fickle and inconſtant in his friendſhips; irreſolute in his temper, timid and puſillanimous in adverſity; ſeduced by favorites and flatterers; plunged in diſſolute pleaſures; and deſtitute of that elevation of ſentiment, or generous ambition, which connects the public intereſts with its own; he acted only a ſubordinate part: and notwithſtanding his high quality of preſumptive heir to the crown, he was treated as a priſoner of ſtate (12).

King of Navarre.

The king of Navarre, afterwards ſo diſtinguiſhed under the name of Henry the Fourth, and who was reſerved by Providence to reſtore tranquillity to his country; had diſplayed, under circumſtances the moſt humiliating, a firmneſs of mind and magnanimity, which impreſſed even his enemies with reſpect and admiration. His valor, courteſy, and humanity, had endeared him to the nation. But, deprived of his patrimonial dominions; ſeparated from his friends and adherents; compelled to abjure his religion; regarded by the queen-mother with jealouſy and ſuſpicion; deſtitute of reſources, and detained in an inglorious captivity; all his great qualities were buried in obſcurity, and did not unfold

(11) Ut ſupra, paſſim.

(12) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 102 and 114. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 37. Davila, p. 396.

themſelves

themſelves till called into action, by the augmenting calamities of France (13).

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His couſin, Henry, prince of Condé, occupied a greater portion of public attention, though removed by his birth to a more remote diſtance from the crown. Of a character ſevere, ſerious, and reſerved; little addicted to the gratifications of pleaſure; zealouſly attached to the principles of the reformed faith and worſhip; inflexible, brave, indefatigable, active, and formed for war; he had already aſſumed an aſcendancy in the counſels of the Hugonots, and aſpired to the rank of their chief and leader. Having effected his eſcape from Amiens, he had reached the frontiers of Germany; reſumed the exerciſe of the Proteſtant religion, which Charles the Ninth had obliged him by menaces to renounce; and prepared to enter the kingdom with a formidable army (14).

Prince of Condé.

The place which the prince of Condé emulated as head of the Proteſtants, was poſſeſſed by the duke of Guiſe in the eſtimation of the Catholics. Nature had conferred on him almoſt all the qualifications, calculated to conciliate and retain the popular favor. Generous and munificent, even to profuſion; affable and condeſcending in his manners; intrepid, to a degree of temerity; and adorned with every grace of exterior figure and deportment, he attracted univerſal admiration. His courage, at a very early period of his life, had been diſtinguiſhed during the ſiege of Poitiers, as his father's had been at that of Metz. Deſcended from the family of Lorrain, and allied to the houſe of Bourbon; poſſeſſing an hereditary hatred for the Hugonots, and the moſt ardent zeal for the ſupport of the antient religion, he was regarded as its beſt protector. Surrounded by a numerous and powerful band of adherents; guided

Duke of Guiſe.

(13) De Thou, and Mezerai, paſſim.
(14) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 122 and 139.

by

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by the counſels of his uncle, the cardinal of Lorrain; and capable of the boldeſt projects of ambition; he ſeemed to be ſcarcely comprehended within the rank of a ſubject, and already inſpired jealouſy into the crown itſelf (15).

Family of Montmorenci.

The houſe of Montmorenci, which had formerly maintained ſo long a competition with that of Guiſe, for power and favor, was fallen into a ſtate of depreſſion and diſgrace, towards the cloſe of the reign of Charles the Ninth. The marſhal Montmorenci, eldeſt ſon to the late conſtable, one of the moſt virtuous and incorrupt noblemen of the age, who had married the natural daughter of Henry the Second, was deſtitute of iſſue. Having been implicated in the attempt of the duke of Alençon to withdraw from court; his participation or privity in an enterprize, regarded as ſo criminal, had afforded a pretext for committing him to the Baſtile, where he languiſhed in confinement (16). Damville, his brother, not leſs odious to the government, owed his ſafety only to his abſence and diſtance from the capital. He had been appointed governor of the province of Languedoc; and, aware of the machinations of Catherine of Medicis, who exerted every means to ſeize his perſon, he already began to concert meaſures with the Proteſtants, for their common preſervation. The two remaining ſons of the conſtable, Thoré and Meru, involved in the common ruin or perſecution of their family, openly joined the inſurgents, who, in various quarters of the kingdom, began to appear in arms (17).

(15) De Thou, Mezerai, paſſim.

(16) Davila, p. 399. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 121 and 122. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 54.

(17) Davila, 395. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 122.

Such

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Such was the general aſpect and ſituation of France, at the death of Charles the Ninth. Paris had not yet experienced in an extended degree, the calamities inſeparable from civil war. The Hugonot armies which had twice approached its walls, were neither ſufficiently numerous nor powerful, to affect it by famine; and they were ſpeedily driven from the vicinity of the capital, by the ſuperior forces of the Catholics. The frequent reſidence, and expenſive amuſements of a voluptuous court, kept alive the arts of luxury, and diffuſed a fallacious opulence. The maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, when the city was abandoned to all the enormities of a ſanguinary and ferocious populace, had been only temporary; and the extermination of the Proteſtants had produced an apparent uniformity in religious faith and worſhip, among the inhabitants. No ſymptoms nor indications of diſloyalty and rebellion had hitherto manifeſted themſelves: on the contrary, when the marſhals Montmorenci, and Coſſé, were ſent priſoners to the Baſtile, by order of Catherine, only a ſhort time before the deceaſe of Charles the Ninth; the Pariſians had exhibited every demonſtration of joy, and had even furniſhed a guard for the ſecurity and detention of the captives (18).

State of Paris.

But, theſe appearances of order and proſperity in the metropolis, were contraſted with every ſpecies of misfortune in the provinces. Subordination and obedience had been ſubverted, by long habits of revolt and hoſtility. Normandy, peculiarly expoſed, by its ſituation, to the attacks of the Engliſh, was become the theatre of war. Montgomery, whoſe fatal dexterity had originally produced the calamities of his country; and who had eſcaped by flight from the carnage of his friends, at the maſſacre of Paris;

Condition of the provinces.

Normandy.

(18) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 121. Davila, 399. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 54 and 55.

having

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having landed with a naval force, not far from Cherburg, made a rapid progreſs. Inveſted by the marſhal Matignon, in Domfront, after a brave defence againſt ſuperior numbers, he had ſurrendered upon a vague aſſurance of perſonal ſafety, which was afterwards violated. Colombieres, another of the Hugonot leaders, periſhed in the breach, at St. Lo; and every part of the province experienced the fury, or ſeverity of the royaliſts (19).

Brittany.

Brittany, protected, in ſome meaſure, by its almoſt inſular poſition, and its diſtance from the interior parts of the kingdom, enjoyed a degree of comparative calm: but, from the mouth of the Loire, to that of the Garonne, comprehending an extent of near one hundred leagues, in the richeſt, moſt populous, and commercial diſtricts of France, the Hugonots maintained a conflict with their enemies. Their principal power and reſources were concentered in Poitou, Angoumois, and Saintonge, where their numbers far exceeded thoſe of the Catholics. The battles of Jarnac and Montcontour had been fought in that quarter of the kingdom, which, during the third civil war, had been the principal theatre of military operations. Rochelle, open to the Atlantic, enjoying an extenſive trade, ſupplied by England with arms and ammunition, inhabited by zealous adherents of the reformed religion, and elated by the recent advantage gained over the duke of Anjou; already began to arrogate and aſſume a ſpecies of independence. It was to be apprehended, that a republic might ariſe within the monarchy of France, the moſt inimical to its grandeur and repoſe, ſupported by foreign powers, and difficult, if not impoſſible, to be reduced by force (20).

Rochelle.

(19) Davila, 403—6. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 57—60. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 118 and 119.

(20) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 44 and 45. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 116, &c. Comm. de Montluc, vol. iv. p. 344. Le Laboureur ſur Caſtelman, vol. iii. p. 396 and 397.

Guyenne

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Guienne and Gaſcony, from the banks of the Garonne, to the foot of the Pyrenees and the frontiers of Spain, were ſcarcely more tranquil. Montluc, whoſe name has been tranſmitted by his writings, as well as by his actions, to poſterity, had during many years, exerciſed over the Hugonots in thoſe provinces, the moſt inhuman tyranny. Wounded at the ſtorm of a little town in Bigorre, and incapacitated by age and infirmities, for the fatigues of a camp; he had been recently diſmiſſed from the command of the royal forces: but his ſucceſſor did not reſtore calm or order among the inhabitants (21). Guienne, and Gaſcony.

In the extenſive government of Languedoc, Damville, to whom it had been entruſted, no longer profeſſed any deference for the orders of the court. Irritated by the queen mother's attempts to involve him in the proſcription of his family, he embraced a line of conduct, the moſt repugnant to his character and inclinations. Attached to the crown by gratitude and affection, he was reduced to the neceſſity of engaging in open rebellion: zealouſly devoted to the antient religion, he ſaw himſelf compelled to join with the Proteſtants. Having made himſelf maſter of Montpellier, and of ſome other places in the vicinity of the Rhone, he prepared to defend himſelf by force of arms: and he even peremptorily refuſed to lay down his office, notwithſtanding repeated mandates of the ſovereign (22). Languedoc.

No part of the kingdom, during the whole courſe of the reign of Charles the Ninth, had ſuffered more ſeverely from civil diſſentions than the two provinces of Dauphiné and Provence. From the gates of Lyons, to thoſe of Marſeilles, every village was Dauphiné, and Provence.

(21) Montluc, Comm. vol. iv. paſſim.

(22) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 48. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 119 and 120. Le Laboureur ſur Caſtelnau, vol. iii. p. 397.

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fortified, and every caſtle was defended. All interior communication was ſuſpended by the exceſſes and ravages of the contending parties. The mountainous and rugged nature of the country; the facility of eſcaping into Savoy, or Switzerland; and the ſuperior numbers of the Hugonots in Dauphiné, prolonged the conteſt. The names of Montbrun, Mouvans, d'Acier, and des Adrets, on the ſide of the Proteſtants; and thoſe of the count of Sommerive, and the grand prior of France, on the other, were become deteſtable for their acts of wanton and deliberate cruelty. Humanity ſeemed to be extinct in the breaſts of the chiefs; and mutual animoſity knew no limits in the gratification of vengeance (23).

Burgundy.

Burgundy, which after the deceaſe of marſhal Tavannes, was committed to the care of the duke of Mayenne; and Champagne, the immediate government of his brother, the duke of Guiſe, were in a great meaſure exempt from theſe calamities. But, the oppreſſions and diſorders, committed on the inferior claſſes, by a ſoldiery deſtitute of any regular pay, were ſuch, as loudly to demand interpoſition and redreſs. The weakneſs of the government rendered it neceſſary to tolerate enormities, by which the peaſants were reduced to poverty and ruin (24).

Champagne.

Interior provinces.

The interior and central provinces, Berry, Auvergne, and the Limoſin, together with thoſe on the banks of the Loire, though they had largely participated in the general deſolation of the kingdom, were not marked by any characteriſtic, or diſcriminating features.

Picardy.

Picardy, the government of which had been confided to the prince of Condé, was not leſs averſe to the reformed religion. The inhabitants, credulous, iraſcible, and ſuſceptible of the ſtrongeſt

(23) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 85 and 86. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 138.
(24) Memoires de Tavannes, p. 33—35.

impreſſions

impreſſions of ſuperſtition, already gave indications of that ſpirit and temper, which ſhortly afterwards fitted them for the reception and commencement of the famous union, denominated "the League." CHAP. I. 1574.

The firſt act of Catherine of Medicis, after the deceaſe of Charles the Ninth, was inſtantly to diſpatch meſſengers, who might convey, with the utmoſt ſpeed, intelligence of the event, to the king of Poland. In order to enſure obedience to her own authority, during the interval which muſt neceſſarily elapſe before his return from ſo remote a country, ſhe immediately addreſſed letters to the governors, magiſtrates, and great officers of the crown, throughout France, notifying the death of the late ſovereign, and his previous nomination of herſelf to the regency. The ſituation of public affairs demanded meaſures equally lenient and vigorous. The Proteſtants, who had already, in many provinces, taken up arms, encouraged by the vacancy of the throne, and the abſence of the legitimate ſucceſſor, were becoming daily more formidable. The prince of Condé hovered on the borders of the kingdom, ready to enter it, at the head of a numerous body of German forces. Even the Catholics had loſt their reſpect for the royal authority, and felt little attachment towards the perſon or character of the regent. But, Catherine, long accuſtomed to the toils and labors of government; miſtreſs of all the arts of diſſimulation; and having in her cuſtody, the firſt princes of the blood, as well as the other principal perſons of whoſe fidelity ſhe was doubtful, manifeſted no ſymptoms of apprehenſion. In compliance with the uſual maxims of her conciliating and temporiſing policy, ſhe began a negociation with La Noue, the chief of the inſurgents in Poitou; and anxious to ſuſpend all operations of a hoſtile nature, till the arrival of the new king, ſhe agreed upon a truce for two months, with

30th May. Meaſures of Catherine, on her aſſumption of the regency.

Truce with the Hugonots.

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the Hugonots. They were even permitted to hold a general assembly of their delegates, at Milhaud, in Languedoc, where measures might be concerted for a general pacification (25).

Trial of the count of Montgomery.

But, in the person of the count of Montgomery, her revenge, superior either to the dictates of justice, or the considerations of honor, induced her to make a distinguished sacrifice. That gallant and unfortunate nobleman, having surrendered upon the assurances of personal safety and protection, given him by Matignon, commander of the royal forces; had been, nevertheless, by Catherine's express command, transferred to Paris. The parliament, subservient to the regent's wishes, became the instrument of her vengeance. Montgomery, upon pretexts equally frivolous and insufficient, was condemned to suffer capital punishment, as guilty of treason; and he was previously put to the torture, in order to extort from him an avowal of the pretended conspiracy, meditated by the admiral Coligni, against Charles the Ninth. His courage and magnanimity did not forsake him, under circumstances so trying. He bore the rack, without uttering any exclamations, except those of indignation for the breach of faith, committed against him; and though dislocated in all his limbs, by the severity of the torture, he preserved an intrepid countenance to the last moment of his life. From the sledge, on which he was drawn to the place of execution, he addressed the populace, and desired their prayers. On the scaffold, he evinced the same unshaken constancy and composure, terminating by the hand of the executioner, a career, which had been distinguished in its course, by many brilliant atchievments. His real crime, for which he suffered,

His execution.

26th June.

(25) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 83 and 84. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 134---137. Davila, p. 411---415.

was the unintentional death of Henry the Second; and Catherine offered him up as a victim to the memory of her husband. "Memorable example," says de Thou, "to teach us, that in the strokes "which attack crowned heads, misfortune is cri- "minal, even though the will be innocent (26)!"

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While these events took place in France, the king of Poland received, at Cracow, the news of his brother's death, and his own succession. Two very different modes of action presented themselves to him, and claimed his mature deliberation. The first, more honorable and dignified, was, to demand permission of the senate to return to his hereditary dominions, and to endeavour to procure the election of the duke of Alençon to the Polish crown. The other, more expeditious and secure, was, by a pre-

Flight of the king of Poland, from Cracow.

(26) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 87. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 135 and 136, D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. ii. p. 130 and 131.

D'Aubigné, who was a spectator of Montgomery's death, has left us the most circumstantial and interesting detail of that event. It may serve, in many particulars, to excite equal pity and indignation. "The count," says he, "wept, when he was informed of the decease of Charles the "Ninth, and from that instant regarded his own execution as certain. "The commissioners, before whom he was examined, would not exempt "him from the torture, though he did not attempt to disguise, or to con- "ceal any fact. He was conducted to the scaffold, in the "Place de "Greve," dressed in mourning; and after having complained that his "executioners had broken his limbs, by the violence of the application of "the torture, he composed his countenance, in order to harangue the "spectators." D'Aubigné has preserved Montgomery's speech in this last, and trying situation. It breathes all the energy and elevation of a mind, sustained by a cause which appeared to him to be a good one, and for which he had sacrificed every consideration. He denied and reprobated the absurd pretexts, which Catherine of Medicis and his judges had used, in order to condemn him as guilty of treason. Having mentioned his involuntary crime in the death of Henry the Second, he enjoined the multitude assembled, to inform his sons, who had been involved in the penalties of his sentence, and degraded from the rank of nobles; that, "if "they had not the virtue to regain it, and to restore themselves, he con- "sented to their degradation." He protested that his only real guilt consisted in his steady adherence to a religion, proscribed by the government, and for which so many individuals had already suffered in France. Having requested the executioner not to apply any bandage before his eyes, he passed a short time in prayer, and then submitted to his sentence. De Thou, who is more concise in his narration, agrees in every important particular, with D'Aubigné, and condemns the injustice of the trial and execution.

cipitate

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cipitate retreat, or rather flight, to gain the frontiers of the Auſtrian territories, and regardleſs of every inferior conſideration, to preſent himſelf again in France. The latter advice, more analogous to the character, and gratifying to the inclinations of Henry, prevailed. After having made the neceſſary diſpoſitions for concealing his deſign, he quitted his capital under cover of the night, with only a few attendants; and was already on the borders of Sileſia, before his departure was univerſally known in Cracow. The Poles, irritated at ſo contemptuous a dereliction of the royalty to which they had recently elevated him, manifeſted their reſentment, by arreſting the principal perſons of his court, who remained in their hands: but, the ſenate being aſſembled, and having heard the reaſons for his conduct, ordered his equipage and ſervants to be honorably conducted to their maſter. A body of near four hundred horſe purſued, and overtook the fugitive prince, who had paſſed the Poliſh limits, and was no longer in danger of being re-conducted as a captive to his own palace. Count Tenczyn, at the head of a ſmall number of gentlemen, advancing, unarmed, towards him, endeavoured by exhortations and entreaties to induce him to return to Cracow. Henry received theſe marks of affection, with ſimilar demonſtrations of regard; promiſed to reviſit Poland, after having reſtored tranquillity to France; aſſigned the reaſons which had neceſſitated him to withdraw from a country and people, for whom he ſhould always preſerve the moſt lively attachment; and continued his journey to Vienna (27).

18th June.

His reception by the emperor Maximilian.

The circumſtances of his flight, which were, in ſome meaſure, ignominious, when contraſted with thoſe of his elevation to the throne of the ſame

(27) Solignac, Hiſt. de Pologne, vol. v. p. 453—473. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 72—76. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 140 and 141.

kingdom,

kingdom, only a few months preceding, were ſpeedily effaced from his mind, by the reception which he met with in the imperial court. Maximilian the Second treated him with every mark of deference and honor; advanced to meet him with a ſplendid retinue; and detained him ſome days, in his capital, among feſtivities and entertainments. That beneficent and enlightened monarch, whoſe maxims of toleration rendered his reign happy and proſperous, ſtrenuouſly exhorted Henry, on his return to France, to adopt ſimilar principles of government. He adviſed gentle meaſures towards the Hugonots, and beſought of him, to commemorate the æra of his entry into his hereditary dominions, by giving peace to his ſubjects, of every perſuaſion. Theſe arguments and entreaties, Maximilian enforced by the example of his own, and of his father, Ferdinand's experience; who after many ineffectual efforts to reduce the Germans by violence, had found, that in matters of faith, war, far from curing, only aggravated the evil. It would have been fortunate for Henry and the people, if the remonſtrances of the emperor had influenced his future conduct (28). CHAP. I. 1574.

Unwilling to paſs through the territories of the elector palatine, from whom he had received ſo ſignal and humiliating an affront, on his former progreſs to Poland; the king determined on taking his courſe through Lombardy. The magnificence with which the Republic of Venice honoured his approach and arrival, far exceeded that which any other European ſtate could exert, in the ſixteenth century. From the inſtant that he entered the Venetian territories, to the moment of his final departure, every variety of ſuperb and diverſified amuſement was laviſhed, to gratify their royal gueſt. That cele- Magnificent treatment of Henry at Venice.

(28) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 76. Solignac, vol. v. p. 473—476. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 141 and 142.

brated

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brated Commonwealth, though paſt its meridian, was ſtill the center of commerce, arts, and luxury. Its peculiar ſituation among the waves of the Adriatic, enabled the Senate to exhibit a ſpecies of pomp and ſplendor, not to be found in any other capital. During nine days which Henry paſſed in Venice, he beheld a perpetual ſucceſſion of ſhews, games, and recreations. Triumphal arches, raiſed on the deſigns of Palladio: combats, naval and military: illuminations, and balls, where the Venetian ladies, equally celebrated for their charms and their gallantry, endeavoured to captivate the young monarch: theſe varied pleaſures, which the policy of the Republic offered to its antient and moſt powerful ally, detained him, notwithſtanding the preſſing exhortations of Catherine, his mother, to haſten his return (29).

27th July. Quitting with reluctance a city, which contained ſo many attractions, and accompanied by the dukes of Savoy, Mantua, and Ferrara, he proceeded towards Turin; remounted the river Po, and arrived

24th Aug. His arrival at Turin. in that capital, after having declined to viſit Milan, where Don John of Auſtria commanded for the king of Spain.

State of France. France, during his abſence, had been torn by almoſt every calamity, incident to a ſtate where religion ſerved as a pretext, to conceal the projects of faction and ambition. In Poitou, the ſuſpenſion of arms, which had been concluded by the regent, was violated on her part; and the royal forces, under the duke of Montpenſier, profiting of the ſecurity of the Hugonots, after having captured Fontenoy, menaced Rochelle itſelf. Damville, after long irreſolution, iſſued a proclamation, avowing his junction with the Proteſtants; while, on the other hand, the prince of Condé publiſhed a manifeſto, from Heidelberg, in the Palatinate, accuſing the

(29) Hiſt. de Veniſe, par Laugier, vol. x. p. 293—307. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 78—81.

evil

evil counſellors of the crown, with having produced the diſorders under which the kingdom laboured. He preceded it, by letters addreſſed to the delegates, aſſembled at Milhaud, in which he demanded ſupplies of money, and promiſed to conduct to their aſſiſtance a military force. They, in return, elected him for their chief, though with very limited powers, of every kind. Throughout Languedoc, Guyenne, and Bearn, the Proteſtants were, univerſally, in arms: but, in Dauphiné, where Montbrun commanded againſt the royal army, hoſtilities were carried on with the greateſt violence (30). CHAP. I. 1574.

In the midſt of ſuch complicated national misfortunes, which the regent fomented by her inſidious and treacherous policy; that princeſs, after having cauſed the obſequies of the late king to be performed, quitted Paris, accompanied by her two priſoners, the duke of Alençon, and the king of Navarre. Paſſing through the province of Burgundy, ſhe reviewed in perſon a body of ſix thouſand Switzers, whom ſhe had cauſed to be levied, and arrived at Lyons, where ſhe impatiently expected the return of her favorite ſon (31). Catherine advances to Lyons. Auguſt.

The court of Turin, during the ſhort reſidence which Henry made in it, was become the center of political intrigue and cabal. Margaret, ducheſs of Savoy, daughter of Francis the Firſt, one of the moſt accompliſhed princeſſes of the age, endeavoured to enforce the exhortations, made to him at Vienna, by the emperor Maximilian; and ſhe attempted, in conjunction with the duke, her huſband, Emanuel Philibert, to reconcile him with the family of Montmorenci. Damville himſelf, whoſe loyalty and attachment to the crown had been ſhaken, but, not effaced, by the perſecution of Catherine of Me- Political intrigues at Turin.

(30) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 138—140. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 85—95.
(31) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 95. Davila, p. 418.

dicis;

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dicis; and who hoped to regain the intereſt which he had formerly poſſeſſed in Henry's eſteem; ventured, under the engagement of the duke of Savoy, for his protection, to repair in perſon, to Turin. The king received him with demonſtrations of affection. Bellegarde, who occupied a diſtinguiſhed place in the royal favour, and Pibrac, joined their efforts to thoſe of Damville, and appeared to have made a deep impreſſion on the mind of the king. But, theſe auſpicious beginnings were ſoon ſubverted and changed by the emiſſaries of the regent, who not only induced Henry to ſuſpend every meaſure tending towards peace; but, inſtilled ſuſpicions of Damville's fidelity. That nobleman, alarmed at the viſible alteration in his ſovereign's behaviour, and apprehenſive of being arreſted, left Turin with precipitation, and returned to his government of Languedoc, where he immediately ſigned an agreement with the Proteſtants (32).

Schemes of the duke of Savoy.

Emanuel Philibert, though he had failed in this attempt, was ſucceſsful in another, which, as a ſovereign prince, affected him far more deeply, and perſonally. Of the numerous garriſons, and extenſive conqueſts, acquired by Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second, in Savoy and Piedmont, only Pignerol, Savillan, and the valley of Perouſe, remained to France. All the others had been reſtored to the duke, by the treaty of peace, in 1559. The poſſeſſion of theſe fortreſſes, not only gave to the French kings facility of penetrating at pleaſure into Italy, by the paſſages of the Alps; but, from their vicinity to Turin itſelf, held the dukes of Savoy in awe, and kept them in a ſtate of perpetual dependance. Every motive of ſound policy dictated to preſerve them with jealous attention. But, Henry, gained by the careſſes of Emanuel Philibert, and

(32) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 131 and 132. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 144 and 145.

neglectful

neglectful of the true interests of his crown, was prevailed on to promise their restitution (33).

1574. Arrival of Henry at Lyons.

The king soon afterwards quitted Turin, and proceeded towards the frontiers of his own dominions, attended by the duke of Savoy, at the head of his troops. This escort was not merely honorary, as the province of Dauphiné was infested by the Hugonot forces, who committed perpetual depredations on the confines of the two states. At the "Pont de Beauvoisin," where France and Savoy divide, he was met by the duke of Alençon and the king of Navarre, whom he received with marks of apparent civility and affection. On the following day, the interview between himself and his mother, took place; and the new king, accompanied by Catherine, and a vast train, made a public and magnificent entry into the city of Lyons (34).

5th Sept.

(33) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 145. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 132 and 133. Davila, p. 419.

(34) Davila, p. 420. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 133 and 134. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 146 and 147.

CHAP. II.

Condition of the kingdom, and of parties, at Henry's assumption of the government.—Continuation of the war against the Protestants.—Restitution of Pignerol, Saviilan, and Perouse, to Savoy.—Journey of the court to Avignon.—Death of the cardinal of Lorrain.—Inauguration, and marriage of the king.—Capture, and execution of Montbrun.—Inactivity, and vices of Henry.—Escape of the duke of Alençon.—Defeat of Thoré.—Truce with Alençon.—Entry of the German army into France.—Flight of the king of Navarre.—Negociation, and conclusion of peace.—Foreign affairs.—State of Flanders.—Election of Stephen Battori, to the crown of Poland.—Death of Maximilian the Second.—Aspect of Europe.

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1574. September.

HENRY the Third, at the period of his return to France, was in the flower of his youth, having scarcely attained his twenty-third year. His figure was graceful and elegant: an air of majesty, tempered by sweetness, accompanied all his actions; and his eloquence was dignified, captivating, and calculated to persuade. He had been educated in habits of dissimulation, and initiated in his earliest years, to the fatigues of a camp. The reputation, which he had acquired by the victories of Jarnac, and of Montcontour, for which he was principally indebted to marshal Tavannes, his governor; had conduced in no small degree, to elevate him to the Polish throne. Europe expected from him, as he attained to manhood, a display of martial talents, and hardy virtue. He had been privy to, and active in all the counsels, which preceded the massacre of Paris, where he betrayed the most unrelenting barbarity

barity towards the Hugonots. The ſhort period of his ſtay in Poland, had not allowed time for the exerciſe of any diſtinguiſhed qualities; and the circumſtances of his flight from that country, though inglorious, were, in ſome meaſure, excuſed, or palliated, by the neceſſity of his immediate appearance in France. CHAP. II. 1574. Character, and qualities of the new king.

The ſituation of the kingdom, to which he was called by the deceaſe of Charles the Ninth, though critical and alarming, was by no means deſperate. Two powerful factions, irritated almoſt to frenzy againſt each other, by a long ſeries of mutual injuries, violence, and war, perſiſted to maintain a deſperate conflict. Religion added new incentives to their animoſity, and aggravated the ſources of diſcord. But, the leaders, on either ſide, continued to profeſs obedience to their common ſovereign: the majeſty of the throne, though defaced and violated, was not ſubverted; and the wounds which had been inflicted on the ſtate, however deep and recent, admitted of a cure. Two great, and oppoſite lines of conduct, preſented themſelves for Henry's choice: either to ſignalize his acceſſion by giving peace to his ſubjects; or, to continue the war, already begun, to the ſubjection and extermination of the Hugonots. Every inducement of humanity, wiſdom, and policy, ſeemed to dictate the former meaſure. He had already evinced a diſpoſition towards it; and its accompliſhment muſt have been attended with conſequences equally beneficial to his people, and happy for himſelf. But, the fatal counſels of his mother; the intolerant ſpirit of the age, which knew no limit to perſecution; the deſire of ſignalizing his zeal againſt thoſe enemies, whom he had oppoſed and vanquiſhed in his early youth; and the hope of triumphing over, and finally extinguiſhing both the Catholic and Proteſtant factions, when weakened by their diſſentions: theſe fallacious reaſons Situation of France.

determined

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determined him, after some hesitation, to command hostilities (1).

1574. Vices, and defects of Henry.

From this improvident and ruinous step, originated all the subsequent misfortunes of his reign; and every part of his conduct evinced to the nation, that effeminacy, indolence, and luxury, had enervated his mind. Instead of acting with vigor to reform the abuses, which, under shelter of the commotions of the late government, had invaded the different departments; he had no sooner arrived in his dominions, than he resigned himself to inactivity. An enemy to fatigue, and incapable of application, he neglected all affairs of moment: surrounded only by parasites and favorites; difficult of access; entrenched in ceremonies and parade; or negligently reclined in a barge, richly decorated, on the river Saone, he appeared to have forgotten every duty annexed to his station. It was not possible to recognize the prince, who had been educated in the field, and trained to the hardships of a military life. The nobility, and the veteran officers of his army, disgusted at a change so unexpected, forsook the court, which became desert; and all the expectations to which Henry had given birth, when presumptive heir to the crown, disappeared from the instant of his accession (2).

Restoration of Pignerol and Savillan.

The contempt and alienation which so indecent a conduct excited among his subjects, were not diminished by the accomplishment of his engagement to the duke of Savoy, in restoring to him Pignerol, Savillan, and the valley of Perouse. Henry, more, as his enemies asserted, from facility and prodigality, than from any sentiment of equity or justice, ordered the immediate evacuation of those garrisons. All

(1) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 136—152. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 153. Davila, p. 420—426. D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. ii. p. 132 and 133.
(2) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 134 and 135. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 150.

the

the remonſtrances of the duke of Nevers, to whoſe government they had been confided; joined to the oppoſition of his wiſeſt miniſters, were ineffectual (3). Emanuel Philibert repaid the generoſity of the king, with neglect; and, liberated from ſo formidable a neighbour, aſſumed a higher tone in all his negotiations with France. It ſeemed as if the new ſovereign, not content with the omiſſion of the great duties exacted from him, deſired to diminiſh the power, and to contract the limits of his dominions (4). CHAP. II. 1574.

While Henry, at the commencement of his reign, thus ſacrificed his own dignity, and the eſteem of his people, the kingdom became a prey to civil war. In Poitou, the duke of Montpenſier, after a long ſiege, made himſelf maſter of Luſignan, and demoliſhed that celebrated fortreſs. But, in the vicinity of Lyons, the Hugonots, unreſtrained by any reſpect for the perſon of their ſovereign, committed depredations with impunity, and refuſed to pay obedience to the royal mandate, enjoining them to lay down their arms. Montbrun, their commander, who had pillaged the baggage of Henry, on its paſſage from Savoy, treated with neglect his injunction to retire to his own home. Bellegarde, to whom the command of the Catholic forces had been committed, was repulſed in an aſſault upon the little town of Livron in Dauphiné; and every circumſtance ſeemed to combine, to mark the æra of Henry's return to France, with ignominy and misfortune (5). Renewal of the civil war.

As if inſenſible to the national diſtreſs, the court, during theſe occurrences, was plunged in diſſipation, and immerſed in pleaſures. Catherine of Medicis encouraged the propenſity of her ſon to profuſion Diſſipation of the court.

(3) Memoires du Duc de Nevers, folio, Paris, 1665, vol. i. p. 3—26, and p. 33—68.

(4) Davila, p. 419. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 154—157. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 151 and 152.

(5) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 153 and 154. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 159—164.

and

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and indolence, with a view to engroſs a larger portion of authority, and to render her interpoſition more neceſſary. Indifferent as to the means by which ſhe accompliſhed her objects, and reſtrained by no principles of virtue in their proſecution, ſhe made gallantry ſubſervient to all her projects. The ladies of her houſhold, initiated in the myſteries of their ſovereign, aided and facilitated her views, by ſacrificing their honor, at her command; and ſhe endeavoured to ſoften the captivity of the duke d'Alençon and the king of Navarre, who were ſtill detained in an honorable confinement, by ſtimulating their paſſions, or fomenting their jealouſy, as circumſtances ſeemed to follow.

Attachment of Henry, to Mary of Cleves.

The king himſelf, divided between various candidates for his affection, had determined to eſpouſe Mary of Cleves, princeſs of Condé, of whom, while duke of Anjou, he had been enamoured. The indecorum, if not criminality, of ſuch a choice, and the obſtacle interpoſed by her marriage, were diſregarded in the violence of his attachment. Religion afforded a favourable pretext for procuring a divorce; the princeſs having adhered to the Catholic faith, ſince the maſſacre of Paris. All the exertions of the queen-mother; terrified at the aſcendant which a beautiful and accompliſhed woman, raiſed to the throne, might have retained over her ſon; would have been ineffectual to prevent its accompliſhment, if death had not interpoſed. The princeſs was carried off by a ſudden and violent diſtemper, which naturally excited ſuſpicions, in an age and court, to which the uſe of poiſons was familiar. Henry appeared to be inconſolable for this event: but, after betraying the moſt extravagant ſymptoms of grief, he, with equal rapidity, paſſed to the contrary extreme, and even attempted to attribute to the effect of enchantment, his paſſion and emotions for the death of his miſtreſs (6).

(6) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 155.

Under

Under the pretence of opening a negociation with marſhal Damville, governor of Languedoc, which would be rendered more practicable by approaching the confines of the province, Catherine ſoon afterwards induced the king to transfer his reſidence from Lyons to Avignon. During his ſtay in that city, which being a dependancy of the papal ſee, naturally preſented continual ſcenes of devotion and ſuperſtition, Henry firſt ſaw, and was deeply impreſſed by proceſſions of penitents, or flagellants, who publicly inflicted on themſelves the ſevereſt diſcipline. The inſtitution had originated about a century preceding, among the fervid and fantaſtic imaginations of the Italians, and had not yet penetrated into France. The king, who with effeminacy, and many of the vices moſt contrary to morals, had, notwithſtanding, a decided inclination for that factitious piety, which conſiſts in external ceremonies; eagerly caught at the ſhadow of religion; and partly from inclination, partly from policy, aſſiſted in perſon, followed by all his courtiers, at the proceſſions of Avignon (7).

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Inſtitution of the penitents.

This devout extravagance proved fatal to the cardinal of Lorrain, who was carried off, by a violent fever, occaſioned by his attendance, barefooted, on one of the ceremonies of the penitents. Notwithſtanding the variety and ſplendor of his talents, he was neither lamented by the king, nor regretted by the nation. His arrogance in proſperity; the violence of his ambition; and the puſillanimity of his conduct under circumſtances of danger, or depreſſion: theſe defects and vices had impeded the greatneſs of his family, and rendered him generally unpopular. Even the clergy to whoſe intereſts he ſeemed to have been ſo much devoted, regarded him as the enemy of their order; and accuſed him of having ſacrificed the

December. Death of the cardinal of Lorrain.

(7) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 164 and 165. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 156.

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revenues of the church, to his desire of acquiring, or retaining, the favor of the crown. He was quickly forgotten in a court, engrossed only by dissipation (8).

1575. Wearied with ineffectual efforts to conclude an accommodation with Damville, who, on his guard against the insidious artifices of the queen-mother, refused to accede to her propositions; Henry at length quitted Avignon, and began his journey back to Lyons. The Protestants, in possession of many places on either side of the Rhone, and not intimidated by his approach, defended themselves with equal courage and success. His presence in the camp before Livron, an inconsiderable town of Dauphiné, and the efforts made by the troops, under the eye of the king, to render themselves masters of it, only produced an aggravation of disgrace. They were repulsed; and the Hugonots, elated with so signal an advantage, outraged their sovereign, from the walls, by the most insolent and poignant reproaches. They even pursued the royal army in its retreat, cut in pieces the Switzers, and did not spare the sick, who had been left behind in the camp (9).

Royal forces, repulsed before Livron. January.

15th Feb. Inauguration of Henry.

His nuptials.

Under such an accumulation of ignominy, Henry proceed towards Rheims, where the ceremony of his inauguration was performed with the accustomed magnificence. On the following day, his nuptials were solemnized with Louisa, daughter of Nicholas, count of Vaudemont, a prince of the house of Lorrain. The king and court, plunged in excesses of every kind, appeared to have forgotten that the country was desolated by civil war. Prodigality compleated the ruin of the finances; and even an insurrection in the garrison of Mentz, one of the

(8) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 155 and 156. Davila, p. 427. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 165—7.

(9) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 246.

most

most important frontier possessions of France, could not rouse to exertion a prince, sunk in sloth and luxury (10). CHAP. II. 1575.

Long and ineffectual conferences were held, after Henry's return to the capital, between the delegates of the moderate Catholics, who acknowledged Damville as their head, and the emissaries of the prince of Condé as chief of the Hugonots, acting together on one side; and on the other, the council of state, at which the king himself was present, and assisted. No beneficial consequence resulted from their deliberations, which only produced new delays, and mutual distrust. In almost all the provinces, hostilities were commenced, and carried on with augmented violence: though not attended with any decisive consequence to either party, yet the principal advantages were gained by the Protestants. The city of Perigueux was taken and abandoned to pillage, by Langoiran, one of their commanders; while Damville extended his acquisitions in Languedoc. Montbrun, who had long been the terror of the Catholics in Dauphiné, and who had recently defeated their general in an engagement, felt in his turn the mutability of fortune. Having pursued with too much precipitation, a body of Catholic forces; his troops, imprudently occupied in pillage, were attacked by the enemy, who had rallied. He himself, after having performed every duty of a veteran and intrepid leader, was compelled in turn to retreat; and his horse falling under him, his thigh was fractured. In this situation, he surrendered prisoner of war, upon assurances of protection for his life. But, the court, mindful of the indignities received from him, anxious to inflict an exemplary punishment on so distinguished an officer,

Ineffectual conferences for peace.

May.

Defeat of Montbrun.

July.

(10) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 157. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 248—250. Davila, p. 428.

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and little attentive to the obſervation of any engagements; cauſed him to be interrogated before judges, like an ordinary criminal, accuſed of treaſon. He was condemned to die; and the ſentence was accelerated, from an apprehenſion of his eſcaping by a natural death, in conſequence of his fracture. When conducted to the ſcaffold, although debilitated in body, and ſcarcely capable of ſuſtaining himſelf, he exerted the moſt chearful and compoſed fortitude; harangued the ſpectators, and ſubmitted to his fate without a murmur. Like Montgomery, he was ſacrificed to the vengeance of the court; but, his execution, far from intimidating the Hugonots, only exaſperated them to new exertions. Leſdiguieres, at that time, in early youth, and who afterwards roſe by merit and talents, to the high dignity of conſtable of France, ſucceeded to Montbrun's credit and command. By the ſeverity of his diſcipline, he ſoon rendered his troops more formidable, and maintained his ſuperiority over the royal arms in Dauphiné (11).

His execution.

While

(11) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 268—272. Davila, p. 428 and 429. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 133—137.

The leading circumſtances of Montbrun's capture and execution, are found in De Thou, and confirmed by D'Aubigné. Every exertion was made to obtain his pardon, or, at leaſt, that he might be treated as a priſoner of war. The prince of Condé, and Damville, ſent deputies to intercede, and to remonſtrate in his favor. Even the duke of Guiſe, whoſe powerful intereſt might have ſaved any other criminal, and who wiſhed to exchange him againſt Beſme, the aſſaſſin of Coligni, then in the hands of the Hugonots, could not prevail. The queen-mother, and Henry were inexorable. Montbrun had been the firſt ſubject, who had dared to take up arms againſt the crown: he had put to death numbers of Catholics; and when had recently plundered the royal baggage, he accompanied the act with a ſarcaſtic obſervation, that "war and play rendered all conditions equal." The court was alarmed leſt a natural death, in conſequence of his accident from the fracture of his thigh, ſhould rob them of their prey. His trial was indecently precipitated by the parliament of Grenoble. There is a ſtriking ſimilarity in the particulars of his death, to thoſe which accompanied Montgomery's execution. Though extenuated, and weakened to a great degree, his fortitude was unſhaken on the ſcaffold; and he ventured, in defiance of every prohibition, to harangue the people. He proteſted his innocence of rebellion, declared his ſatisfaction

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1575. Indolence and effeminacy of Henry.

While theſe ſcenes of bloodſhed and violence were acted in the different provinces of the kingdom, Henry, regardleſs of his own character, or of the public ſecurity, gave full ſcope to all his weakneſſes and vices. Reſigned to the dominion of rapacious favorites, to whom the people juſtly applied the odious denomination of minions, his profuſion in heaping honors and emoluments on them, knew no limits. The moſt unmanly pleaſures occupied his time, and left him neither leiſure, nor inclination, for public buſineſs. Perpetual rivalities between the favorites of the king, and thoſe of his brother, the duke of Alençon, transformed the palace into a theatre of quarrel, outrage, and diſſention. Intrigues of policy and gallantry formed the only objects of ſerious attention. The duke of Guiſe, who had already conceived thoſe projects of elevation, which he afterwards executed, ſtimulated the young queen to render herſelf miſtreſs of her huſband, and to aſpire to the guidance of the ſtate: but, Louiſa did not poſſeſs ſufficient energy and talents, to ſucceed in ſuch an attempt. Educated in principles of an auſtere and melancholy devotion, ſhe poſſeſſed few mental endowments, calculated to retain the affections of a diſſolute and capricious prince. Her modeſty and virtue ſecured the eſteem, but never enabled her to acquire any aſcendant over the mind of Henry. The queen-mother, with her uſual diſſimulation, fomented the jealouſy, which from perſonal, as well as political cauſes, continually took place between the duke of Alençon and the king of Navarre. Thoſe princes were ſtill detained in a ſort of confinement; and the court, careleſs of every ex-

tion in laying down his life for the cauſe of religion; and ſtretched out his head to the executioner. The Hugonots ſeverely revenged his death on the Catholics, in the vicinity of Grenoble. De Thou ſtrongly condemns the ſpirit of vengeance, by which the court was actuated on this occaſion.

ternal

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1575.

ternal concern, was immerſed in pleaſures, when an unexpected and alarming incident rouſed the king to a temporary exertion (12).

Eſcape of the duke of Alençon.

Francis, duke of Alençon, had hitherto been reſtrained from any effort to withdraw himſelf, or to form a party in oppoſition to the crown, by various motives. The expectation of his election to the Poliſh throne, which had been firſt held out to his ambition, had already proved fallacious; and the poſt to which he aſpired of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, was too powerful and dangerous, to be conferred on any ſubject. Tired with fruitleſs ſolicitations; inſulted by the minions of the king, who paid little regard to his dignity; and ſtimulated by his own adherents, who hoped to acquire conſideration from their maſter's freedom; he determined to quit a court and capital, where he was ſubjected to

15th Sept.

continual mortifications. Having, on pretence of an affair of gallantry, gone into the ſuburbs, he inſtantly mounted on horſeback; and, before the intelligence of his flight was publicly known, he reached the city of Dreux, on the confines of Normandy; from whence he iſſued a manifeſto, calculated to conciliate the public favor. It enumerated the grievances under which the nation ſuffered; reprobated the number and ſeverity of the pecuniary impoſitions; ſtated the neceſſity of a reform in the government, and finiſhed by demanding an aſſembly of the ſtates general (13).

Conſternation occaſioned by it.

The conſternation of the court, on this event, was equal to the ſecurity, by which it had been preceded. Henry, awaking from the lethargy in which he had been plunged, ſent the duke of Nevers, at

(12) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 161—163.

(13) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 82—86, and p. 92—94. Davila, p. 431—433. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 285—288. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 176—179. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 163-4.

the

the head of a body of troops, to purſue his brother; commanded the poſts in the vicinity of Paris to be occupied; and made every preparation for defence. Meanwhile, the duke of Alençon, having continued his retreat, was met in Poitou, by many of the Hugonot chiefs, who expected protection and ſupport from his junction with their party; and the conſequences to the government were rendered more ſerious, by the certainty of the approach of a German army, conducted by the prince of Condé in perſon, which was ready to enter the kingdom. Terrified at ſuch a proſpect, deſtitute of reſources, and ever ready from the impulſe of his natural diſpoſition, to have recourſe to temporizing meaſures; the king, by the advice of his mother, opened a negociation for peace. Catherine, anxious to prevent hoſtilities between her two ſons, and at the ſame time to render her interpoſition neceſſary; undertook to go in queſt of the duke of Alençon, and to diſpoſe his mind towards a reconciliation. In order to facilitate ſo delicate and arduous a work, ſhe began by liberating the two marſhals, Montmorenci and Coſſé, who had languiſhed in the Baſtile ſince the concluſion of the late reign. Their influence with the duke of Alençon was great; and his manifeſto had demanded, in ſpecific terms, their emancipation from an unjuſt and cruel captivity. Accompanied by theſe noblemen, ſhe immediately quitted Paris, and ſet out on her journey towards Champigny, in Touraine, the place appointed to manage a conference (14).

Efforts of the Queen Dowager, to prevent a war.

A conſiderable detachment from the army of the prince of Condé, commanded by Thoré, one of the younger ſons of the conſtable Montmorenci,

(14) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 287—292. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 178. Davila, p. 434. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 92—99.

had

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had already passed the Rhine, entered France, and advanced to the banks of the river Marne, on its march to join the duke of Alençon. At the town of Dormans, in Champagne, the royal forces, commanded by the duke of Guise in person, attempted to oppose their farther progress; and as their numbers were greatly superior to those of Thoré, it seemed to be imprudent in him to hazard an action. But, that nobleman, confiding in the bravery of his troops, did not decline the combat. After a long and desperate engagement, he was defeated; the Germans, who composed a principal part of his force, were cut to pieces; and he himself, at the head of a few cavalry, escaped with difficulty. The victory, on the other side, was not purchased without bloodshed; and the duke of Guise himself, in the pursuit, received a wound in the cheek from a private soldier, the scar of which he always retained, and which served as an honorable testimony to the people, of his zeal in the defence of the Catholic religion (15).

1575. Combat of Dormans.

November.

Truce concluded.

Notwithstanding so severe a check, the duke of Alençon did not evince any eagerness to accept the terms offered him by Catharine, or to conclude an accommodation. The queen-mother, after ineffectually exerting every endeavour for the purpose, was reduced to the necessity of agreeing to a truce for six months between the two parties. Nor did Henry purchase even the short and precarious suspension of hostilities for so limited a period, without great concessions: the stipulation of payment for the Germans levied by the prince of Condé; places of security for the Hugonots; and a body of troops for the guard of the duke of Alençon. On these conditions, the truce was at length published by that

22d Decem.

(15) Davila, p. 435 and 436. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 292—295. D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. ii. p. 179—183.

prince

prince in his camp, and acquieſced in by his Proteſtant allies (16). It was evident, that, on the part of the king, as neceſſity alone had dictated ſo humiliating an agreement, there was no ſerious intention of carrying it into effect. Pretences were found for delaying, or evading ſome of the ſtipulations; and the governors of the places, which were to be ſurrendered to the confederates, encouraged by the court, refuſed to comply with the orders iſſued for their evacuation. Henry made preparations for war, and ordered a levy of ſix thouſand Switzers to be inſtantly commenced. But, when he attempted to enact pecuniary ſupplies from the inhabitants of Paris, and convoked an aſſembly for the immediate object of raiſing them, he received a peremptory refuſal. The parliament, clergy, and citizens of the capital, in the language of a free and indignant people, repreſented without diſguiſe, and in the preſence of the king, the abuſes, malverſations, and profuſion, by which the treaſury had been drained, and the country exhauſted. Henry, far from puniſhing, did not even venture to mark his reſentment at ſo bold a remonſtrance; and having diſmiſſed the aſſembly, he prepared to ſupport the hoſtilities againſt his brother, from other, and more eaſy modes of contribution (17).

1575. Artifices of the court.

The German army, led by John Caſimir, ſon to the elector Palatine, and the prince of Condé, which had ſo long hovered on the borders of the kingdom, at length began its march. Their numbers exceeded eighteen thouſand; and as the royal forces, commanded, in the abſence of the duke of Guiſe, by his brother the duke of Mayenne, were far inferior, no obſtacle was interpoſed, effectually

1576. Entrance of the Germans into France. January.

(16) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 295. Davila, p. 437. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 99—104.

(17) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 296—299.

to

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to impede their entry and progreſs into the interior provinces. Having paſſed through Lorrain and Burgundy almoſt unoppoſed, they croſſed the Loire, and effected their junction near Moulins in the Bourbonnois, with the duke of Alençon. Previous to this event, Henry, king of Navarre, wearied with a confinement of near four years in the court of Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third; diſappointed in every hope of employment; odious to the queen-mother; and forgotten or neglected by the king himſelf; took the reſolution of eſcaping from his captivity. Having deceived his guards, while engaged in hunting, he paſſed the Seine without delay, accompanied only by his choſen friends; arrived ſafely at Vendome; and having reſumed the exerciſe of the Proteſtant religion, continued his retreat towards Guienne, of which province he was governor (18).

Flight of the king of Navarre.

23d. Feb.

Mean-

(18) D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 183---189. Davila, p. 438---44^. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 169. D'Aubigné, Memoires, p. 49---52.

The moſt minute relation of the eſcape and flight of the king of Navarre, is to be found in D'Aubigné, who has violated his cuſtomary brevity, in order to commemorate every circumſtance which preceded and accompanied an event, ſo deciſive in its conſequences, and ſo hazardous in its execution. Six perſons only were privy to it, who ſwore inviolable ſecrecy; and the king of Navarre, by affecting to believe that he ſhould be conſtituted lieutenant general of France, confirmed the ſecurity of the court. On the evening preceding the day upon which he effected his eſcape, Fervaques, one of the ſix perſons entruſted with the deſign, revealed it to Henry the Third. D'Aubigné having been preſent, and ſuſpecting the treachery of his aſſociate, charged him with it: and on his avowing it, inſtantly carried the intelligence to his maſter. The king of Navarre, after a day paſſed in hunting, accompanied by two gentlemen, his guards, who never quitted him; was at the town of Senlis, ten leagues diſtant from Paris. On receiving the information from D'Aubigné, that his intention was diſcovered, he inſtantly took a deciſive reſolution. Accompanied by a few adherents, he mounted on horſeback, and having deceived his guards by an ingenious fiction, gained the banks of the Seine, which he paſſed near Poiſſi, on the following morning. Arriving, after numberleſs perils, at Alençon, he was there ſpeedily joined by near two hundred and fifty gentlemen. Among theſe was Fervaques himſelf; who being warned by Grillon, that Henry the Third, notwithſtanding the recent ſervice which he had performed, was irritated againſt him, and had even determined to put him to death, as an accomplice with the king of Navarre; immediately contrived to leave Paris. As an excuſe for his perfidy

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Meanwhile, the chiefs of the confederate army, who unanimouſly acknowledged the duke of Alençon for their ſupreme head, aſſembled at Moulins, and preſented articles to the king, on the acceptance of which, they profeſſed a readineſs to lay down their arms. Henry received their deputies with marks of regard, and promiſed a ſpeedy anſwer to their demands. Notwithſtanding the formidable nature of their forces, and the defenceleſs ſituation of the crown, many cauſes conduced to render their operations weak and languid. The German forces, ill paid and mutinous, were with difficulty retained under their ſtandards, and inſolently threatened to exact by force, their arrears. The leaders of the combined forces were of different nations, religions, and intereſts. Mutual jealouſy and diſtruſt prevailed among them; and the prince of Condé, who had, with equal danger and ſucceſs, conducted ſo large a body of foreign troops into the center of the kingdom, ſaw himſelf ſupplanted by the duke of Alençon. The recent eſcape of the king of Navarre, introduced a new competitor, and increaſed the colliſion of oppoſite claims for pre-eminence. It became impoſſible to act with union and energy to one object; and the court availed itſelf of theſe circumſtances. The duke of Alençon betrayed the ſtrongeſt diſpoſition to ſacrifice his allies, to the acquiſition of perſonal power; and the queen-mother, anxious to withdraw him from his new friends, gratified him on that favorite point. After a number of delays, the treaty of pacification was finally concluded by Catherine, and ſoon afterwards ſolemnly ratified by the king in perſon. It was, in

State of the confederates.

Concluſion of peace. 14th May.

fidy, he aſſerted that Madame de Carnavalet had previouſly revealed to Henry the Third, the plan concerted for the king of Navarre's eſcape; and his apology was admitted. D'Aubigné expreſsly ſays, that the ſoldiers, who guarded the king of Navarre in the Louvre, were placed about him by Catherine of Medicis herſelf; that they were zealous Catholics, and had, almoſt all of them, been active in the maſſacre of Paris.

almoſt

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almoſt all the articles, ignominious to the crown, and advantageous to the confederates (19).

1576. Conditions of it.

The eſtabliſhment of the duke of Alençon was augmented by the addition of three of the richeſt provinces of France, Berry, Touraine, and Anjou: he himſelf aſſumed from that period, the title of duke of Anjou. Eight cities, in different parts of the kingdom, were ceded to the Proteſtants, for their ſecurity: every immunity or privilege, civil and religious, which could place them on an equality with the Catholics, was granted them: freedom of worſhip, the right of celebrating marriage, and of holding, under certain regulations, ſynods, or conſiſtories, were conceded. The king not only reverſed the attainders againſt Coligni, Montgomery, Montbrun, and their adherents; but, he renounced, on his own part, all participation in, or approbation of, the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew. Penſions and rewards were conferred on John Caſimir, who had raiſed the army which enabled the confederates to dictate to the crown; and a convocation of the ſtates-general was ſtipulated to be held within ſix months, in order to repreſent the grievances of the people, and to apply adequate remedies (20).

Affairs of the Netherlands.

While Henry, by a peace, which degraded his own dignity, and excited the indignation of his Catholic ſubjects, obtained a reſpite from his enemies; the Spaniſh provinces in the Netherlands exhibited a ſcene of anarchy and deſolation, ſcarcely paralleled in hiſtory. Requeſens, after a ſhort and troubleſome adminiſtration, diſtinguiſhed by his unremitting, but, unſucceſsful exertions, to reſtore order throughout the Low Countries, had been carried off by a violent diſtemper. His gentle and

(19) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 117—135.

(20) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 169—174. Davila, p. 442—445. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 416—418. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 215.

conciliating

conciliating character might, probably, have revived the allegiance of the Flemings for Philip the Second, if all poſſibility of reconciliation had not been precluded by the cruelties of his predeceſſor, the duke of Alva. The ſudden and unexpected nature of Requeſens' death, left him no time to execute the orders of the court of Madrid, in the nomination of a ſucceſſor. In this defect of any legal governor, the council of ſtate aſſumed the ſupreme authority, which was afterwards confirmed by the king of Spain. But, the revolt of the Spaniſh troops; their ſeizure of Aloſt; and the multiplied acts of outrage and violence, committed by them on the people, rendered any attempt to conciliate the minds of men impracticable. The ſack of Antwerp, juſtly eſteemed at that period, the moſt wealthy and commercial city in Europe, completed the calamities of Flanders, and drove the ſtates of the province to the final neceſſity of uniting with thoſe of Holland and Zealand, for their common protection. By the celebrated league, denominated the Pacification of Ghent, they agreed to make war upon the Spaniards, till they ſhould be entirely driven out of the Netherlands. This treaty was notwithſtanding made, and publiſhed in the name of Philip, from whom the ſtates of Flanders had not withdrawn their obedience. But, the ſmall number of his troops left in the country, and the augmenting progreſs of the Flemings, rendered the conteſt very unequal. The only adequate remedy to ſuch accumulated evils, lay in the immediate nomination of a governor, whoſe talents and capacity might yet retrieve the royal affairs. Don John of Auſtria was ſelected by the king for the employment. The luſtre of his birth; the attachment, entertained for the memory of the emperor, Charles the Fifth, his father, who was himſelf a native of Flanders; and the high reputation which Don

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Death of Requeſens.

Pacification of Ghent.

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Don John had acquired by the victory of Lepanto: theſe circumſtances, it was hoped, might aid his efforts, and terminate the rebellion, which had ſo long rendered the Netherlands a theatre of war. The prince inſtantly obeyed the orders of his ſovereign: having received directions for his conduct, he paſſed through France in diſguiſe, and arrived ſafely at Luxembourg, the capital of the province of the ſame name, which had refuſed to enter into the general confederacy for the expulſion of the Spaniards (21).

Arrival of Don John of Auſtria.

Affairs of Poland.

After the precipitate departure of Henry from Poland, that kingdom remained for a conſiderable time, in a ſtate of interregnum. The Senate and the other orders having met at Warſaw, drew up letters to him, which, though couched in terms of obedience and reſpect, evinced the reſentment of the nation, for his contempt of their crown. They demanded his immediate return, to reſume the functions of his dignity, as well as to protect them againſt external invaſion; in caſe of his refuſal or delay, they ſignified to him their reſolution to declare the vacancy of the throne, and to proceed to a new election. Henry made only ſome faint and ineffectual exertions, to avert ſo deciſive a meaſure. Pibrac, who was diſpatched by him to Cracow, with inſtructions to propoſe to the diet, the union of the two kingdoms of France and Poland, found the ſentence of depoſition already iſſued, and the decree publiſhed in the capital. In ſo deſperate and hopeleſs a ſituation, he, nevertheleſs, exerted every effort to prevent its accompliſhment; addreſſed letters, in Henry's name, to the nobles; and urged all the motives which might be ſuppoſed to influence their deliberations. But, the Poles had irre-

Depoſition of Henry by the Poles.

(21) Strada, de Bello Bel. vol. ii. p. 285—320. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 364—394.

vocably

vocably determined to elect another ſovereign; and the two factions by which the kingdom was agitated, however adverſe to each other, agreed in their common averſion to the French prince and nation. The emperor Maximilian the Second was choſen in the enſuing diet, by a conſiderable party; but, his delays proved fatal to his cauſe, and gave advantages to his rival, which could never be retrieved. Stephen Battori, a Hungarian nobleman, who had been elected prince of Tranſylvania, called in by his adherents, was raiſed to the throne. His vigor, capacity, and various endowments, rendered him worthy of ſo extraordinary an elevation; and Poland, under his reign, was equally tranquil at home, and reſpected by foreign powers (22.)

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Election of Stephen Battori. May.

It was, notwithſtanding, highly probable, that his election would be followed by a civil and a foreign war. The partizans of Maximilian were numerous and powerful: John Baſilowitz, Czar of Muſcovy, prepared to ſupport him, and to invade the eaſtern provinces of the kingdom: Dantzic, the moſt opulent and trading city of Poland, refuſed obedience to Stephen; and the emperor himſelf, though neither of martial temper, nor diſpoſed to engage unneceſſarily in hoſtilities; yet, could not tamely ſubmit to renounce a ſceptre, which had been conferred on him by a conſiderable number of the ſuffrages of the nation. The Poles were exempted from this calamity, by the death of Maximilian, who expired at Ratiſbon, in the fiftieth year of his age, after having held the Imperial dignity only twelve years. His loſs was deeply and univerſally felt, by every denomination of his ſubjects. The benignity of his character; his enlarged principles of toleration; his love of peace; his application to buſineſs; and the deſire by which he was animated of diffuſing

Death of Maximilian the Second. October.

His character.

(22) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 273—285, p. 353—356. Solignac, Hiſt. de Polo. vol. v. p. 477—493.

happineſs,

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happineſs, rendered him inexpreſſibly dear to his people. The houſe of Auſtria, though not formidable to the repoſe of Europe, as it had been under Charles the Fifth, his uncle, was ſtill reſpectable; and the Imperial office, which, in Maximilian's hands, inſpired equal veneration and affection, fell into contempt, and almoſt oblivion, under the adminiſtration of his ſucceſſor, Rodolph the Second. The laſt acts of Maximilian were exerted to maintain the civil and religious tranquillity of Germany; nor did the ſixteenth century produce any ſovereign, ſo juſtly entitled to the love of his contemporaries, and the eſteem of poſterity (23).

State of Europe.

The other European ſtates, at this period of time, offered few events which materially affected the general repoſe.

England.

England, governed by Elizabeth, enjoyed a profound tranquillity; though that wiſe and vigilant princeſs, who never, during her long reign, intermitted her provident attention, kept a conſtant eye upon the concerns of the Netherlands, and already extended to them her indirect aſſiſtance.

Spain.

Philip the Second, not leſs attentive, and ſtill more deeply intereſted, in the fate of the Low Countries, exhauſted the immenſe treaſures and reſources of his vaſt dominions, in fruitleſs exertions to reduce the Flemings. Incapable of atchieving it by force, and apprehenſive of the interference of France, he began to move thoſe ſecret, but powerful ſprings, in the interior ſyſtem of the French government, by which the throne of Henry the Third was ſhaken, and nearly ſubverted. Philip himſelf, occupied in viſiting the various provinces of Spain, in reforming abuſes, and in reſtoring juſtice, diſcharged with ability the functions annexed to his ſituation; and he preſerved an uninterrupted peace in the Spaniſh monarchy, while Flanders was deſolated by all the

(23) Schmidt, Hiſt. des Allemans, tranſlated by de la Veaux, vol. viii. p. 384—390. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 358.

calamities

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calamities of war (24). Portugal, at the ſummit of proſperity, approached the term of its greatneſs, and even of its exiſtence, as an independant nation. Sebaſtian, intoxicated with views of conqueſt in Africa, was engroſſed by that ſingle object. In defiance of the remonſtrances of his miniſters, and even of Philip the Second, he was preparing to embark on the fatal expedition againſt Morocco, which terminated his life, and reduced his country to a ſtate of ſervitude and degradation (25).

Portugal.

(24) Abregé Chronologique d'Eſpagne, et Portugal, vol. ii. p. 425.
(25) Abregé Chronologique d'Eſpagne, et Portugal, p. 423 and 424.

CHAP. III.

Origin, formation, and principles of "the League."—Assembly of the states general, at Blois.—Henry declares himself the chief of "the League."—Renewal of the war with the Protestants.—Peace.—Edict of Poitiers.—Conduct of the king.—State of the court.—Expedition, and death of Sebastian, king of Portugal.—Affairs of the Netherlands.—Duke of Anjou is called to the assistance of the Flemings.—Death of Don John of Austria.—Internal concerns of France.—Recommencement of the civil war.—Causes, by which it was produced.—Ill success of the Hugonots.—Conclusion of peace.—Affairs of the Low Countries.—Exploits of the prince of Parma.—Treaty, made by the States of Flanders, with the duke of Anjou.—Death of Henry, king of Portugal.—Conquests of that kingdom, by Philip the Second.—Death, and character of Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy.

CHAP. III.

1576.

THE peace which Henry had recently concluded with the confederate princes, had disarmed and disunited that powerful combination; but, it had by no means secured either his own repose, or the tranquillity of his subjects. Conditions, such as the Hugonots had extorted from him, placed them on an equality with the Catholics, in every essential point; and might rather be esteemed the triumph, than the toleration, of the Protestant religion. Nor could the people persuade themselves, that these concessions were the result of wisdom, in a discerning and sagacious monarch, attentive to the great interests of his dominions, and watchful over the general felicity. The whole tenor of Henry's conduct exposed

Condition of France.

exposed him to censure, and tended to render him odious and contemptible. Sunk in dissipation, his prodigality had already exhausted all the ordinary sources of revenue, and subjected him to the severe humiliation of a refusal, when he attempted to extort supplies from the capital. His attachment to the Catholic faith was unquestionable; and his antipathy to all innovation in religious concerns was equally ascertained. But his devotion had nothing elevated, or even rational, in its nature; and it consisted rather in monastic observances, or ecclesiastical ceremonies, than in a sincere obedience to the duties and precepts of piety and morality. The indignation excited among his Catholic subjects, at the terms of the late pacification, concurring with the disadvantageous impressions, which the king's general character and administration produced, were artfully fomented by the partizans of the family of Guise. They represented, and exaggerated, the vices of Henry; the danger to which he exposed the antient religion; and the urgent necessity of some speedy interposition, to protect from ruin the church and state. The dissimulation of the queen-mother, and her indifference to every mode of faith; the recent junction of the duke of Anjou with the Protestants; and the pernicious concessions made by the king, in order to detach him from that party: all these obvious topics of declamation were insisted on with asperity and malignity. The minds of men, irritated by so forcible an appeal to their passions, and exasperated by the arts of faction, were prepared for a daring effort; and as the crown had either abandoned or betrayed their cause, they began to look elsewhere for support and protection. (1).

1576. Dissatisfaction of the Catholics.

In such a state of fermentation and discontent, no remedy was regarded as too violent for the dis- Confederations, formed.

(1) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 422—429.

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ease. Allegiance itself seemed to be withdrawn, where superior considerations stimulated to resistance; and it became requisite to combine, for the purpose of mutual preservation against a common enemy. During the turbulent and agitated periods of the reign of Charles the Ninth, indications of a disposition in the people to form confederations or fraternities, had manifested themselves, in various parts of France. The avowed or ostensible object of them, was the maintenance of the purity of the Catholic faith; but, from many causes, they had hitherto been confined in their operations, and limited in their extent. The weakness of the throne under Henry, and the personal contempt into which he was fallen, encouraged the most timid, and impelled the most wavering. Picardy, a province, remarkable for the bigotry and fervour of its inhabitants, gave the first open example of an association for preserving the antient religion. By the articles of the late peace, the government of Picardy had been confirmed to the prince of Condé; and the town of Peronne was assigned for his peculiar residence. He was speedily expected to arrive there; and it was natural to suppose, that his presence must be attended with injurious consequences to the zealous Catholics.

Origin of the League.

The apprehension of this impending danger, gave birth to the memorable confederation, known in history by the name of "the League;" which, spreading with rapidity, soon overshadowed, and at length overturned the throne; occasioned the assassination of Henry himself; and during near twenty years, involved the kingdom in all the misfortunes of civil war, confusion, and anarchy (2.)

Its favorable reception.

Humieres, governor of Peronne, was the first instrument and mover of so vast a machine, by encouraging the inhabitants of the place, and of the

(2) Davila, p. 446 and 447. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 177—180.

neigh-

neighbouring country, to ſign the aſſociation. The nobility of Picardy, with ardor, followed the example, which ſpread through various provinces: Champagne, and Burgundy, from the hereditary influence of the dukes of Guiſe and Mayenne, received it univerſally. In Poitou, Louis de la Tremouille, duke of Thouars, from apprehenſion of the Hugonots, who were numerous and powerful in the vicinity of his eſtates, introduced it among his vaſſals, and gave it credit by his ſupport. Agents of an inferior deſcription, chiefly ſelected from the private walks of life, were its promoters in the metropolis.—Paris, diſcontented, and eaſily inflamed by artful ſuggeſtions, embraced with enthuſiaſm, a propoſition, which appeared to have no object except the preſervation of civil and religious rights (3). CHAP. III. 1576.

The form and language of the League itſelf, did not, on a ſuperficial view, ſeem to ſtrike at any of the prerogatives of the crown, or to endanger the public tranquillity. The preſervation of the monarchy, and even of the reigning ſovereign, formed a diſtinguiſhed article of the covenant. But, on a cloſer inſpection, it was evident, that under ſo fair an appearance, deſigns the moſt deſtructive to the kingdom, and to Henry, were concealed. The oath of unlimited obedience to the orders of the chief or head, was clear and ſpecific; and it extended to engage the contracting perſons to ſupport him againſt any and every power, which might oppoſe his commands. No exception, in favour of the crown, was inſerted, or admitted; and it was palpable that another perſon than the ſovereign might be named to that high and dangerous office. Thoſe who were intitiated in the myſteries of the aſſociation, already underſtood, that the duke of Guiſe was deſigned for its leader; and that the king, far from Its nature and principles.

(3) De Thou, ut ſupra. Mezerai, ibid.

receiving

CHAP. III.

receiving protection, might become the victim of the League (4).

1576. Protection extended to it by Philip the Second.

External assistance and support were not wanting to aid the internal efforts, made to spread so alarming a conflagration. Application was made, at a very early period, to the Papal see, for spiritual aid and approbation; while similar demands were conveyed to the court of Spain, for pecuniary supplies, and even, if necessary, for a military force. The answer to both these requests, was encouraging. Gregory the Thirteenth, who then filled the chair of St. Peter, a pontiff of zeal, but neither violent nor sanguinary in his character; though he approved the ostensible motives, yet, apprehensive of the consequences concealed under them, lent only an ambiguous and mitigated degree of sanction to the project. But, Philip, who dreaded the approach of the French arms towards the Netherlands, and already anticipated the application of the Flemings to the duke of Anjou, or to Henry, for succours; did not hesitate to promise the most unbounded assistance to the League, and even accepted the title of its protector (5).

Dissimulation of the king.

Information of the commencement and progress of this alarming attempt to overturn the principles of civil order and obedience, was conveyed, through various channels, to the government. An emissary, who had been dispatched to the court of Rome, was seized on his return to France, by the Hugonots; and the plan of the League in its greatest detail, being found upon him, they rendered it public. Corroborating proofs of the same nature were transmitted to the king, from his embassador at Madrid, in a manner to preclude any doubt upon the authenticity of the intelligence. But, numer-

(4) Davila, p. 448—452. D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. ii. p. 223—230.
(5) Davila, p. 452 and 453. Mezerai, vol. ii. p. 179 and 180.

ous

ous reaſons induced him to diſſemble, and to ſuſpend his reſentment. The Guiſes not only denied many of the charges made againſt themſelves perſonally, as entertaining ambitious views of elevation: thoſe princes were likewiſe popular, powerful, and dangerous to provoke. Henry was incapable of a ſteady, ſyſtematic exertion, and preferred temporizing, to violent meaſures, in every event or ſituation of his life. His policy, which always aimed at deſtroying one faction by another, dictated to him to encourage, rather than depreſs, the party of the Catholics; and as he never meant to accompliſh the conditions of the late peace, he was not ſorry that the general reſentment, manifeſted at the favorable terms granted to the Hugonots, afforded him ſo plauſible a pretence for not carrying it into execution (6). CHAP. III. 1576.

The intentions of the court were clearly manifeſted, by the infractions, openly authorized, or privately permitted, in defiance of all the complaints and remonſtrances of the Hugonots. Even the interpoſition of John Caſimir, who had not yet evacuated the kingdom, and whoſe forces lived at diſcretion in Burgundy, were ineffectual to obtain redreſs. The prince of Condé, far from being put in poſſeſſion of the government of Picardy, was refuſed entrance into Peronne. The admiſſion of Proteſtants into the parliaments and courts of juſtice was delayed, or eluded: their aſſemblies for purpoſes of devotion were inſulted; and every unqualified violation of the peace ſo recently concluded, was committed with impunity. Irritated at ſuch a breach of faith, and deſtitute of any retreat, in caſe of a recommencement of hoſtilities; the prince of Condé, without waiting for the iſſue of a negociation, which Henry had begun with him

He eludes the late treaty.

Reſentment of the prince of Condé.

(6) Davila, p. 453 and 454.

for

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for the exchange of St. John d'Angely in the place of Peronne, rendered himſelf maſter of the former city. It was ſituated in the province of Saintonge; and he ſhortly afterwards acquired a more important poſſeſſion in its vicinity. Brouage, a town, not diſtant from Rochelle, and open to the Atlantic, fell into his hands; and theſe valuable captures formed no inconſiderable equivalent for the loſs of Picardy (7).

Convocation of the ſtates general. December.

Under theſe circumſtances of public fermentation and animoſity, the aſſembly of the ſtates general met at Blois. They were opened by the king in perſon, who, accompanied by his brother, by the queen-mother, and the Catholic princes of the blood, in a long and eloquent harangue, depictured and deplored the condition of the kingdom. He repreſented the decay of loyalty, the diminution of commerce, the triumph of immorality, and the univerſal depravity which pervaded all orders of the people. He profeſſed his readineſs to liſten to their advice, and beſought their co-operation towards reſtoring the proſperity of France. Theſe gracious and conciliating aſſurances were anſwered by ſimilar demonſtrations of affection. But, the king, who had flattered himſelf that he ſhould be able to guide and controul the deliberations of the ſtates, was not long in diſcovering, that a more powerful, though a concealed cauſe, influenced all their deliberations. The boldeſt invaſions of his prerogative were attempted: a renewal of the war was loudly demanded; and the majority proteſted againſt the toleration or exiſtence of any religion, except the Catholic, throughout the kingdom (8). In ſo embarraſſing a ſituation, beſet with difficulties, and conſcious that the emiſſaries of the Guiſes were

Henry ſigns the confederation of the League.

(7) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 432—436. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 176.
(8) Davila, p. 458—463.

maſters

masters of the assembly; Henry embraced an expe- CHAP. dient, which, however the result of necessity, fully III. evinced his own weakness. Apprehensive that the 1576. League might dictate to him in the most peremptory terms, and even turn their forces against him: still more alarmed, that the duke of Guise might be named to the vacant place of chief; he resolved to assume that post himself. Having taken the resolution, he executed it immediately; signed the League in the most public manner, assumed the title of its head, and transmitted the confederation itself to Paris, with orders to receive it throughout the kingdom (9).

So incontestable a proof of his adherence to the Catholic faith, and the prospect of those calamities which were inseparable from a renewal of war, began to produce a deep impression on the assembly. The members of the third estate, aware that on the body of the people, whom they specially represented, the pecuniary burdens must principally fall, betrayed symptoms of aversion to the assumption of arms. Henry augmented these proofs of repugnance, by a requisition of two millions of ducats, a sum not very far short of a million sterling, as indispensable for maintaining the armies to be employed; and he ventured to propose an alienation of the domain of the crown to a considerable annual amount, as the most eligible mode for raising the money, in the present exigency. The proposition was solemnly argued in the assembly; and after a long discussion, the virtue of the representatives of the commons, rejected it in a manner the most decisive. The king, anxious to reduce the Hugonots to a state of civil and religious dependance; but, more desirous to avoid engaging in a war for their extermination, still delayed, and avoided ex-

Measures adopted by the king.

1577. Deputation sent to the Hugonots.

(9) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 458 and 459. Davila, p. 466.

tremities.

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tremities. He even ſent, with a view of deprecating hoſtilities, a deputation to the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, as well as to marſhal Damville. Its reception was different, according to the character and diſpoſition of the three perſons. From the firſt, an anſwer was received, which, though equivocal and ambiguous, breathed the ſpirit of obedience to the crown, and of moderation on religious concerns: but, the prince of Condé, more zealous, inflexible, and ſevere, refuſed either to acknowledge the validity of the ſtates, or to receive their delegates. Damville, while, on one hand, he profeſſed the ſtrongeſt adherence to the Catholic faith, reprobated the violation of the late edict, and declined entering into any negociation, excluſive of the other confederates (10).

Renewal of the civil war.

The irreſolution of Henry was overborne by the imprudence of the Proteſtants themſelves, who, incenſed at the revocation of a treaty, which had ſecured to them ſo many and important immunities, refuſed to admit of any innovation, or modulation of the articles. But, the event ſufficiently demonſtrated, how erroneous an eſtimate they had formed of their own ſtrength and reſources. Diſunited among themſelves; no longer conducted by the genius of Coligni, who had ſurmounted ſo many defeats; unſupported by a foreign force; and preſſed by the ſuperior weight of the crown, united to the Catholics; the conteſt was too unequal to be

March.

long maintained. Two armies, levied by the king, marched againſt them, and met with a feeble reſiſtance. The firſt was commanded by the duke of Anjou in perſon, who, from their ally, had become their moſt implacable opponent. Henry's jealouſy of the duke of Guiſe, excluded him from conduct-

(10) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 471—474. and 478. Davila, p. 469 and 470.

ing

ing the ſecond, which was committed to his brother, the duke of Mayenne. An uninterrupted ſeries of ſucceſs attended both armies. La Charité, one of the moſt important military poſts in the kingdom, as it formed a paſſage acroſs the Loire, and might have facilitated the entry of a German army; ſurrendered, after a ſhort ſiege, to the duke of Anjou. His victorious troops, unoppoſed, penetrated into Auvergne, inveſted Iſſoire in that province; and having entered it at the breach, reduced it to aſhes. The garriſon was ſacrificed to the ferocity of the ſoldiers. Nor was the duke of Mayenne's progreſs in Poitou, leſs rapid. Brouage, which had been recently ſeized by the prince of Condé, capitulated after a long blockade: the Hugonot fleet, which attempted to throw ſupplies of proviſions into the place, was compelled to retire, after ſuſtaining a conſiderable loſs; and even Rochelle itſelf, regarded as the aſylum of the Proteſtant faith and party, appeared to be in a ſituation the moſt perilous. Damville, who had long fluctuated in his political connexions, alienated by ſome cauſes of miſunderſtanding, quitted the confederacy; and turned his arms againſt his late allies, in Languedoc. No effort, worthy their former reputation, was made by any of the Hugonot chiefs. The nobility, weary of the war, retired to their caſtles: the troops diſbanded; and the people, reduced to poverty by the rapacity of a fierce and licentious ſoldiery, loudly demanded a termination of their accumulated misfortunes (11).

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1577. Succeſs of the royal arms. May. June. Auguſt. Feeble exertions of the Hugonots.

If Henry's policy, or inclinations, had permitted him to puſh his advantages over a party, broken, and already vanquiſhed; the Hugonots might have been reduced to accept any conditions, however ſevere, which he had thought proper to impoſe.

Policy of Henry.

(11) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 191—196. Davila, p. 471 and 472.

But,

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But, such a triumph would have been more apparent, than real; and would have conduced more to the advantage of the house of Guise, as the concealed chiefs of the League, than either to the grandeur or stability of the throne. The Catholics themselves, who preserved their allegiance, and who were not disposed to sacrifice the public safety to the ambitious projects of the duke of Guise, betrayed the most anxious desire for peace. Encouraged by these symptoms of the national approbation, Henry, after a short negociation with the king of Navarre, concluded a treaty, which was afterwards ratified and published at Poitiers. It was the fifth, which had been made between the two parties, since the commencement of the civil wars, under Charles the Ninth. The articles, though far less favorable to the Protestants, than those of the preceding one, established and admitted, under certain restrictions, a toleration of religion. Its exercise was, however, interdicted within ten leagues of the metropolis, or, in the immediate vicinity of the court. Eight cities were ceded to the Hugonots, as a guarantee for the execution of the conditions: but, their restitution was stipulated, at the end of four years. Various regulations, calculated to introduce a degree of police, and to maintain order, were inserted into the treaty (12).

Conclusion of peace. September.

Reflexions on that event.

The general satisfaction with which it was received by the majority of the nation, formed its best eulogium. The king, who regarded it as peculiarly his own work, denominated it, with complacency, *his* peace; and the prince of Condé did not manifest less impatience to publish it in the city of Rochelle. It may be esteemed the wisest and most judicious

(12) Davila, p. 473 and 474. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 529—531. Mezerai, vol. ix. p, 197 and 198. D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. ii. p. 327 and 328.

measure

measure of the reign of Henry the Third; and if that prince had improved the occasion which it presented him, of establishing a vigorous administration; the League, notwithstanding its prodigious resources, might have been crushed before it attained to maturity (13). But, the character of the king, as it became more fully unveiled, far from inspiring respect, excited contempt, and even aversion. His profusion anticipated and exhausted the revenues. A succession of favorites, characterized by the same rapacity, profligacy, and contempt of decorum, rendered the court a scene of indecent riot, or of scandalous dissipation. Catherine of Medicis, subservient to all the vices and weaknesses of her son, did not scruple to be present at these festivities; and Margaret, queen of Navarre, her daughter, lost to every sense of female honor, or chastity, constituted the principal ornament of her brother's palace and amusements. The prerogative of the crown became odious, from the abuse of its powers. Taxes, varied by the ingenuity of pernicious ministers, and multiplied in a thousand shapes; while they exhausted the patience of the people, were insufficient to suffice for the prodigality of the sovereign. The mixture of devotion, which Henry affected, and the pilgrimages or processions, in which he continually engaged, only served to render his enormities more conspicuous, and to call in question the sincerity of his attachment to religion itself. His brother, the duke of Anjou, however exempt from some of the imputations thrown on the king, was scarcely more an object of esteem. Like Henry, he was inconstant, capricious, and destitute of principles of virtue; plunged in excesses of libertinism; equally enslaved by favorites; and incapable of sustaining the majesty of the throne, to which his birth, and

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Mal-administration, and vices of the king.

Conduct of the duke of Anjou.

(13) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 289—307.

the

CHAP. III. 1577. the king's want of iſſue, rendered it probable that he might eventually be called. Theſe defects and vices, ſtill more than the great qualities by which the duke of Guiſe was diſtinguiſhed, gradually prepared the minds of the people for the convulſions that followed; and when matured by time, left the crown expoſed to all the enterprizes of ambition, and the violence of rebellion (14).

1578. Internal commotions of France. France, meanwhile, was far from enjoying the internal repoſe, which the peace concluded at Poitiers ought to have naturally produced. Religious antipathy, ſuperior to the force of edicts, or the reſtraints of law, continued to arm the inhabitants againſt each other. The intolerance of the age could not allow liberty of opinion, or of practice, in matters of conſcience; and the long habits of civil war, had rendered the people ſanguinary, ſuſpicious, and cruel. Damville, who exerciſed a ſpecies of independant juriſdiction in his government of Languedoc; on various pretences refuſed to diſarm, and even maintained hoſtilities againſt the Proteſtants. Leſdiguieres, who commanded the Hugonot forces in Dauphiné, had not forgotten the recent execution of Montbrun, under whom he had carried arms; and he did not truſt ſufficiently either the faith of the king, or the ſanction of edicts, to diveſt himſelf of his military protection (15). Many acts of outrage and violence were committed with impunity in the provinces. The court itſelf, after exhibiting every ſpecies of luxurious and diſſolute entertainment, became a theatre of diſcord and of blood. Theſe tranſitions originated in the king's miſconduct, and excited little ſurprize. His brother, the duke of Anjou, diſſatisfied with the treatment which he received, and apprehenſive of being again arreſted,

February. Retreat of the duke of Anjou from court.

(14) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 199.
(15) Davila, p. 474.

withdrew

withdrew a second time, quitted Paris, and retired into Normandy; from whence he sent assurances of his loyalty and obedience to the crown. But, a more serious and tragical event, made a deep, though only a temporary, impression on Henry's mind. From the period of his accession, he had been governed by favorites, who succeeded each other with amazing rapidity. Bellegarde had been supplanted before his master's arrival at Lyons; and du Gua was assassinated within a year, during the plenitude of his power. The vacant places were quickly occupied by new candidates. Villequier, one of the most corrupt and profligate companions of the king's pleasures, presided over the department; and the royal favor was divided between those whom he presented, or recommended. As they were all in the bloom of youth, distinguished by the graces of person, and naturally elated with their good fortune; perpetual quarrels took place between them, and the adherents, or retainers of the nobility, who filled the court.

CHAP. III. 1578.

Royal favorites.

Quelus, one of Henry's minions, having challenged Francis d'Entragues, a young man of quality, attached to the duke of Guise, the combatants, each accompanied by two of his friends, met in one of the most public places of the capital, to terminate the dispute. The seconds engaged with the same ardor and animosity as the principals. Of the six, two were left dead upon the place: one expired on the following day; and Quelus himself, pierced with nineteen wounds, languished near a month, before he breathed his last. The indications of affection, exhibited by the king towards him, during the course of his malady; and the demonstrations of his sorrow for the death of Quelus, and of Maugiron, another of his favorites who had fallen in the duel, were equally indecent and unmanly. He embraced their dead bodies; ordered them

Duel of Quelus and Entragues.

April.

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them a public funeral, at which all the courtiers assisted; received compliments of condolence, as for the loss of the princes of the blood; and appeared to be, for some time, inconsolable (16). Incapable of any permanent emotion, he soon recovered his gaiety, and obliterated the recollection of the deceased, in the society of new favorites. But, the injurious impressions, made by his conduct, on the minds of the people, were not effaced with the same facility. Proofs of contempt, and of indignation, appeared in many parts of the kingdom; and the profusion with which offices, dignities, and emoluments were conferred on the unworthy associates of his looser hours, while it exhausted the public treasure, encreased the general dissatisfaction. The states of Burgundy, in a high-spirited remonstrance, ventured, without disguise, to arraign in severe terms, the king's profusion; enumerated their grievances, and specified the adequate remedies. Henry dissembled his resentment at so bold an attack, which he attributed to the princes of the house of Guise; and he was even reduced to the necessity of employing the intervention of the duke of Mayenne, governor of the province, to allay the discontent of the nobility and of the states. These seeds of discontent were not however eradicated; and time gradually matured them to the most alarming degree (17).

General discontent of the kingdom.

November.

Affairs of Portugal.

While the vices of Henry, which a powerful faction placed in the most conspicuous and odious point of view, silently prepared a great convulsion in France; an ardent, and ill-regulated thirst of glory in Sebastian, king of Portugal, produced the destruction of that monarchy. Having determined

Enterprize of Sebastian.

(16) Etoile. Journ. d'Henry III. p. 92. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 725—728. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 201 and 202.

(17) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 729—731.

on

on an expedition to the coaſt of Barbary, for the purpoſe of reſtoring Mahomet, who pretended to the ſovereignty of Fez, no obſtacles could prevent, nor remonſtrances diſſuade him from his reſolution. After ſurmounting, not without difficulty, numerous impediments, he, at length, embarked from the Tagus, at the head of a numerous ſquadron, and a conſiderable army. Muley Moluc, the reigning prince, againſt whom his efforts were directed, endeavoured to avoid the conteſt, and made offers for an accommodation. But, the temerity and imprudence of Sebaſtian rendered him incapable of diſcerning his own intereſt, or of liſtening to any conſiderations, except thoſe of conqueſt. Landing in Africa, he engaged in a general action near Arzila, where his troops, ill diſciplined, outnumbered by the enemy, and ſurrounded on all ſides, were either cut to pieces, or captured by the Moors. He himſelf, after having given proofs of the moſt deſperate valor, periſhed in the engagement. Mahomet, whom he had vainly attempted to place on the throne of Fez and Morocco, was drowned in his flight from the field of battle; and Muley Moluc, attacked by a mortal diſeaſe, expired in his litter, in the moment of victory, before the event of the day was fully decided. Hamet, his brother, ſucceeded to the ſupreme authority (18).

CHAP. III. 1578.

Auguſt. His death.

The conſternation, occaſioned in Portugal by ſo lamentable a cataſtrophé, exceeded deſcription; and the preſent calamity, however great, was ſwallowed up in the view and contemplation of the more alarming conſequences of Sebaſtian's defeat and death. That young and unfortunate prince had left no iſſue; and the crown devolved to the only ſurviving

Reign of the Cardinal Henry.

(18) La Clede, Hiſt. de Portugal, vol. ii. p. 58—72. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 599—634.

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male deſcendant of their antient kings. Henry, cardinal of the Romiſh church, and archbiſhop of Evora, ſon to the celebrated Emanuel, had attained to his ſixty-ſeventh year, when called to the throne. Adorned with many of the virtues which render a private ſtation amiable, he poſſeſſed few of the qualities requiſite in a monarch; and his advanced period of life, together with his declining health, promiſed only a ſhort and precarious reign. The ſucceſſion, uncertain, and claimed by many candidates, held up to the nation the proſpect of a civil and foreign war; while the late diſaſter deprived them of the means of defence againſt an enemy. Philip the Second, king of Spain, who ſtood in the relation of uncle to Sebaſtian, by the marriage of Iſabella of Portugal with Charles the Fifth, already diſplayed his pretenſions; and the vaſt diſparity between his force, and that of any other claimant, muſt neceſſarily decide the conteſt in his favour (19).

Tranſactions in the Netherlands.

But, neither the terrors of the Spaniſh power, which ſeemed to be on the point of receiving ſo vaſt an acceſſion, by the probable conqueſt of Portugal; nor the preſence and talents of Don John of Auſtria, could reſtore any degree of tranquillity in the Netherlands. The affairs of that country, and its final deſtiny, appeared to become annually more complicated, perplexed, and doubtful. Don John, far from adducing any remedy to the diſcontents of the Flemings, had, by his conduct, alienated and incenſed them againſt the court of Spain. His firſt proceedings were, notwithſtanding, calculated to conciliate univerſal affection. By the advice of Eſcovedo, his ſecretary and miniſter, he confirmed the pacification of Ghent, cauſed the Spaniſh troops inſtantly to evacuate Flanders, and received anew the

Meaſures of Don John of Auſtria.

(19) La Clede, vol. ii. p. 72 and 73.

oath

oath of fealty and obedience from the States, to Philip the Second. His entry into Bruſſels, as governor general, was marked with demonſtrations of public joy; and for a ſhort time, his adminiſtration ſeemed to rival in popularity that of his ſiſter, Margaret of Parma. But, the ambition of Don John could not be gratified by ſo limited an authority; and he ſpeedily repented of his facility, in having diſmiſſed the veteran troops, which had fought under the duke of Alva, and Requeſens. Having ſeized on the citadel of Namur, he prepared to regain the power which he had unwillingly ceded, and to reduce the Flemings, by force of arms. Irritated at ſuch treatment, the States called to their aid the archduke Mathias, ſon to Maximilian the Second, and brother to the emperor Rodolph; while Don John, reinforced by the Spaniards, whom Alexander Farneſe, prince of Parma, conducted from Italy, attacked, and defeated the Flemings at Gemblours (20). CHAP. III. 1578. January.

The duke of Anjou embraces the protection of the Flemings.

An event, which ſeemed to threaten the entire reduction of the Netherlands to the obedience of Philip, and the extinction of all their privileges, afforded a favourable occaſion for the duke of Anjou to offer his aſſiſtance to the States. That prince, reſtleſs and ambitious; ill received at the court of Henry, who feared and ſuſpected him; odious to the Hugonots, whom he had abandoned; and anxious to obtain an eſtabliſhment beyond the limits of his brother's power; immediately ſent a deputation, to make propoſals for undertaking their defence and protection. His agents were received with gratitude, and treated with diſtinction. He himſelf, in order to accelerate the concluſion of the treaty, which promiſed him an entrance into the

(20) Strada, de Bel. Belg. vol. ii. p. 321---404. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 545---573, and 649---661.

CHAP. III. 1578. August.

Low Countries, advanced to the city of Mons in Haynault, where all the conditions were finally settled. He engaged to conduct to their assistance an army of ten thousand infantry, and three thousand cavalry; in return for which, the States conferred on him the title of Protector of the Belgic Liberties; guaranteed to him certain places, as security for the execution of the articles; and promised to elect him for their sovereign, if they should eventually withdraw their alliance from the king of Spain (21).

He enters Haynault.

In consequence of this treaty, the duke of Anjou entered Haynault, at the head of a considerable military force; made himself master of several frontier towns; and excited the highest expectations of his future progress. But, he soon perceived the difficulties attending an enterprize, which demanded talents equally various and superior. His troops, composed of Catholics and Protestants, long accustomed to the licentiousness of civil war, refused to submit to the severity of discipline. The Flemings, disgusted and alienated by the excesses which the French soldiery committed, considered them as enemies, rather than as allies; and the places, stipulated to be delivered to him, shut their gates to oppose his entry. Incensed at the failure of the engagements contracted by the States, the duke of Anjou withdrew again into France; after remonstrating with them on their treatment of him, and assuring them of his return. He even sent a detachment of three thousand men to join the army of the Flemings. The remainder of his forces, no longer paid, immediately disbanded (22).

October.

etreats.

The ill success attending the enterprize of the duke of Anjou, together with the victory lately

(21) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 670 and 671.
(22) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 207—209. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 688—690.

obtained

obtained by Don John of Auſtria at Gemblours, might have reſtored the Spaniſh affairs in the Netherlands, if Philip the Second had extended ſupport to his brother. But, that jealous and ſuſpicious monarch, alarmed at the ambitious and extenſive projects of Don John; far from ſupplying him with the requiſite force to reduce the Flemings, left him in a ſtate of total inability to maintain the war. The Spaniards were defeated in their turn, and compelled to retreat before the army of the States. Eſcovedo, who had been ſent by his maſter, to Madrid, to urge the diſpatch of troops and money, was aſſaſſinated in that capital, by the order, or conſent of the king of Spain. Don John himſelf, exhauſted by fatigue, and depreſſed by anxiety, did not long ſurvive. Having reſigned the command of the forces to Alexander, prince of Parma, he retired to Namur; where the ſtruggles of a high-ſpirited and indignant mind, aiding the advances of diſeaſe, he expired in the vigor of his age, having ſcarcely accompliſhed his thirty-third year. The affliction of his troops at the intelligence, was extreme; and his contemporaries compared him to Germanicus, as they did Philip to Tiberius. The circumſtances of his diſtemper and death, which were, though unjuſtly, attributed to poiſon; and the period of life at which he died, rendered the reſemblance with the Roman general more ſtriking, and the ſimilarity more complete. Philip confirmed the government of the Low Countries, to the prince of Parma; and his great endowments, military as well as civil, rendered him worthy of ſo arduous a ſituation (23).

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Death of Don John.

1ſt October

Prince of Parma, made governor of Netherlands. 1579.

During this period of time, when the attention of all Europe was attracted towards the fate of Portugal, and of Flanders; France offered few events, which deſerve to be commemorated. Henry, who

Indolence of Henry.

(23) Strada, vol. ii. p. 466—471. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 696—698.

might

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might have improved the interval of repoſe, afforded by the peace with the Hugonots, to regain the eſteem of his ſubjects, and to attack, while yet in their infancy, the dangerous deſigns of the League; made no exertions for his own preſervation. Reſigned to a life of indolence and pleaſure, he abandoned the care of the ſtate to his mother, and ſeemed to regard the royal dignity as only intended for the oppreſſion of his people. Catherine of Medicis, whoſe virtues and whoſe vices were more active, viſited, in the name, and by the authority of her ſon, the different parts of his dominions. She negociated with the king of Navarre, in Gaſcony, for the maintenance of the treaty of Poitiers; which, after a long diſcuſſion, was explained by a number of ſecret articles, calculated to prolong the public tranquillity. Having traverſed all Languedoc, and endeavoured to appeaſe, or to extinguiſh the ſeeds of commotion in the province, ſhe arrived at Grenoble, accompanied by Damville; in which place ſhe held a conference with Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy. That able and enterprizing prince had engaged deeply in projects, injurious to Henry. Not content with having already obtained from him, the reſtitution of Pignerol and Savillan, the duke meditated the ſeizure of the marquiſate of Saluzzo. Catherine, anxious to preſerve ſo valuable a poſſeſſion, did not heſitate to paſs the borders of France, in order to have an interview with Bellegarde, the governor, at Montluel, in the territories of Savoy. It was ineffectual; but, his death ſoon afterwards, ſuſpended the execution of Emanuel Philibert's deſigns (24).

Activity of the queen.

March.

Creation of the order of the Holy Ghoſt.

While the queen-mother thus exerciſed the real functions of a ſovereign, Henry performed the pageantries of royalty. The inſtitution of the order

(24) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 217—220. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 75—84. Davila, p. 481—483.

of

of the "Holy Ghoſt," which took place at this period, was deſigned to replace that of "St. Michael," become venal and contemptible, under the late reigns. The celebration of ſo public and ſplendid a ceremony, gratified the king's paſſion for expenſive exhibitions; and he flattered himſelf, that by aſſociating to his new order, many of the higheſt nobility, he might attach to his perſon a number of adherents (25). Inſenſible as Henry appeared to every event of a public or national kind, he, nevertheleſs, betrayed, on various occaſions, a degree of attention, or concern, which proved, that however indolence and flattery had corrupted him, his mind was not totally deſtitute of elevation. He manifeſted the deepeſt regret at the death of marſhal Montmorenci, whom, from the purity of his virtue, his rectitude, and patriotiſm, the glorious title of "the laſt of the French," was conferred by his countrymen. During the rage of civil war, and the ſhock of oppoſite factions, he preſerved his moderation, and exerted all his efforts to extinguiſh the flames of diſcord, by which France was deſolated. Become ſuſpected to Catherine of Medicis, in the laſt months of the reign of Charles the Ninth, on account of his ſuppoſed adherence to the duke of Alençon and the Hugonots; he had been committed to the Baſtile: during his detention in that fortreſs, Henry, at the inſtigation of his mother, had iſſued orders to Souvré, the governor, to ſtrangle him; and he only owed the preſervation of his life to the delays, interpoſed by Souvré. His impriſonment, and the hardſhips annexed to it, advanced his end; and he expired of an apoplectic ſeizure, at fifty years of age. His death, peculiarly in the circumſtances of the kingdom, was a national misfortue. Dam-

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May. Death of marſhal Montmorenci.

(25) Davila, p. 481. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 214—217.

ville,

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ville, his brother, succeeded to the title of Montmorenci (26).

1579. Henry takes under his protection, the city of Geneva.

Nor did the king evince less regard to the interests of the monarchy, on an occasion, which called for his interference, nearly at the same time. The little republic of Geneva, almost surrounded by the dominions of the dukes of Savoy, derived its best security, from the alliance of the Swiss cantons. It was believed, that Philip the Second and Emanuel Philibert had entered into a treaty, the object of which was the conquest and partition of Switzerland. To effect such an enterprize, it was indispensable to commence by the reduction of Geneva; and the ruinous consequences of the plan to France, if carried into execution, were too obvious, to need elucidation. Urged by the cantons of Berne and Soleure, in the name of the Helvetic confederacy, to take the city of Geneva under his protection, as an ally of the Swiss nation; Henry, after a considerable reluctance, complied. Articles, calculated May. for the defence of Geneva, against all external attack, were agreed on, and ratified by the king; who, in the troubles which he already anticipated from the adherents of the League, knew that he should derive his surest military support from the affection of the Switzers (27).

Dissolute conduct of the king.

These transitory or capricious exertions were, unfortunately for himself and his people, preceded and followed by a complete dereliction of every public duty. The finances, committed to the most corrupt and profligate ministers, became annually more inadequate to the necessities of the crown; while the king expended in diversions, or festivities, the produce of accumulated taxes, under which his subjects groaned. The duke of Anjou, after again effecting

(26) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 162 and 163. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 84 and 85.
(27) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 97—99. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 221 and 222.

his

his reconciliation with Henry, had, in ſome measure, poſtponed, though he had not abandoned, his projects on the Netherlands. The brave and celebrated La Noue, a Proteſtant, conducted a body of about three thouſand French, who were to act in conjunction with the ſtates of Flanders; while the duke himſelf, excited by the hopes of marrying Elizabeth, queen of England, had paſſed over, with a very ſlender train, into that kingdom. His reception was ſo flattering, as to maintain him for a long time, in illuſive expectation (28). CHAP. III. 1579. Auguſt.

Towards the cloſe of the year, alarming ſymptoms of the intention of the Hugonots to renew the civil war, began to manifeſt themſelves. At an aſſembly of the Proteſtant churches, held by the king of Navarre in perſon, at Maziere in Gaſcony, it was publickly agitated to take up arms. Various infractions of the laſt treaty, were aſſigned, as the cauſe and juſtification for their conduct; and after conſiderable difference of opinion, it was finally determined, that if immediate redreſs was not obtained from the crown, they would endeavour to extort it by violent means. No reſolution could have been more imprudent, if not unjuſt. Henry had not evinced any hoſtile diſpoſition towards the Hugonots; and the edict of Poitiers had been executed, if not with ſtrictneſs, yet in as literal and rigorous a degree, as the tumultuous ſtate of the kingdom, and the diſordered nature of affairs, could permit. The Proteſtants themſelves were divided, and almoſt defenceleſs. Neither the zeal, nor the union, religious and civil, which had rendered them ſo formidable under Charles the Ninth, continued to exiſt. Since the temporary combination into which they had entered with the duke of Anjou and Damville, num- Internal commotions. November. Hugonots project to renew the war.

(28) Davila, p. 483 and 484. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 80. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 221.

bers

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bers of men, deſtitute of any principles of morals or religion, had united themſelves to the party. The king of Navarre himſelf, though attached to his own faith by honor, and by conviction, yet did not, in his conduct, obſerve even the appearance of decorum and morality. The little court of Nerac, in Gaſcony, where he held his principal reſidence, was the center of pleaſure, libertiniſm, and every ſpecies of gallantry. Margaret, queen of Navarre, his wife, who had been conducted thither by her mother, Catherine of Medicis, gave the example of theſe exceſſes, which were imitated by the courtiers; and ſhe even condeſcended, on many occaſions, to become ſubſervient toher huſband'samours, which ſhe facilitated and conducted (29). The prince of Condé was almoſt the only perſon of diſtinguiſhed rank among the Hugonots, who maintained the purity and fervor of the primitive reformers: but, his power, revenues, and influence, were too limited, to produce any conſiderable effect. He derived, notwithſtanding, a perſonal conſideration from his intrepidity, activity, and indefatigable exertions. Impatient at the delays practiſed by the court of France, to prevent his entrance into Picardy, of which he was only the nominal governor; the prince anticipated the general reſolution of his party, to take up arms. Having quitted the city of St. John d'Angely, in Saintonge, where he uſually reſided, he repaired in diſguiſe to La Fere, in Picardy, which place he ſurprized, and immediately garriſoned (30).

State of the court of Navarre.

Prince of Condé.

November.

1580. Inactivity of the king.

Notwithſtanding this demonſtration of the diſcontent of the Proteſtants, Henry, relying on the promiſes and aſſurances of his ſiſter, the queen of

(29) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 222 and 223. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 344—346. Hiſt. de Marguérite de Valois, p. 322 and 323.
(30) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 94.

Navarre,

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Navarre, took no measures against the projects of his Hugonot subjects. But, Margaret, who had received the most contumelious and humiliating marks of her brother's aversion, on various occasions; and whose vindictive disposition stimulated her to revenge; far from allaying, or soothing the passions of her husband, endeavoured to point them against the person by whom she had been offended. Her exhortations were sufficiently powerful, not only to prevail on the king of Navarre, but, to induce the principal persons in his confidence, to embrace the hazardous expedient of renewing the civil war. Regardless of their own inability to support so arduous an enterprize; and impelled only by pretences of the weakest nature, they began their operations. The king of Navarre, after dispatching messengers to his adherents in Languedoc and Dauphiné, to acquaint them of his ultimate resolution, instantly attempted to make himself master of Cahors, by surprize. That city, capital of the province of Quercy, constituted a part of the dowry of Margaret, his wife; but, the animosity of the inhabitants, zealously devoted to the Catholic faith, had prevented his reception into the place. The garrison, notwithstanding the loss of their governor, who was killed at the beginning of the conflict maintained a desperate resistance for several days; but, the assailants, supported by the presence of their prince, who exposed himself to every danger, were at length victorious. Cahors was reduced to ashes; and every act of unrestrained barbarity was exercised by the Protestants, in retaliation for the massacre committed there under Charles the Ninth, eight years preceding, of which the Hugonots had been the victims (31).

1580.

April. King of Navarre takes up arms.

May. Capture of Cahors.

(31) D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. ii. p. 356—358. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 374—379. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 223—225. Davila, p. 478—489.

The

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The aſtoniſhment of Henry, at receiving intelligence of the attack and capture of Cahors, was exceeded and loſt in his indignation. Surmounting his habitual indolence, he made immediate and vigorous preparations for puniſhing the audacity of his rebellious ſubjects. At the ſame time, that he fitted out three conſiderable armies, deſtined to act againſt them in Dauphiné, Guienne, and Picardy; he embraced a meaſure, not leſs calculated to weaken and diſarm their adherents. A declaration was publiſhed by the royal authority, confirming all the preceding edicts favourable to the Proteſtants, on condition of their remaining peaceable; and enjoining the civil magiſtrates to puniſh as traitors to their country, ſuch as ſhould moleſt them in any manner (32).

Meaſures of the king.

June.

Their effect on the Hugonots.

The effect of ſo wiſe and timely an act, was ſenſibly felt throughout the kingdom. Many perſons, ſincerely attached to the reformed doctrines, had, nevertheleſs, diſapproved the reſumption of arms; and their diſinclination was augmented, as well as juſtified, by the declaration iſſued on the part of the crown. La Noue, one of the moſt virtuous and reſpected of their leaders, who was occupied at that time in hoſtilities againſt the Spaniards in the Netherlands, condemned the war, as manifeſtly unprovoked and unjuſtifiable. Rochelle refuſed to engage in it, and maintained a perfect neutrality. Other provinces declined to contribute towards, or to mingle in the controverſy. Even, in thoſe, where the Hugonots were the moſt numerous or powerful, feeble exertions were made, and few ſucceſsful enterprizes effected. It muſt be avowed, that of all the civil wars, occaſioned by religious animoſity, ſince the conſpiracy of Amboiſe under the reign of Francis the Second, this was begun on the moſt inſufficient pretexts, and is the leaſt to be vindicated (33).

(32) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 387 and 395.
(33) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 225 and 226.

Its

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Its ſucceſs was perfectly correſpondent to the principles, on which it had been commenced, and forcibly evinced the decay of the Hugonot power. Leſdiguieres was reduced to retreat before the duke of Mayenne in Dauphiné, and ſcarcely maintained himſelf among the defiles and mountains of that inacceſſible province. The moderation and clemency of the duke towards his enemies, completed the progreſs of his arms. In Picardy, the prince of Condé, not venturing to ſuſtain a ſiege in the city of La Fere, quitted France, and embarked for England, where he hoped to derive ſupplies from the policy of Elizabeth. Fruſtrated in his expectation, he croſſed over into Germany; and returning through Switzerland into Dauphiné, after ſurmounting numerous impediments, he joined the forces of Leſdiguieres. Meanwhile, the marſhal Matignon, at the head of an army, inveſted and beſieged La Fere. The camp was filled with the young nobility, who, in crouds, arrived from the court to ſignalize their proweſs. At their head, diſtinguiſhed by the ſplendor of their appearance and train, were the two favorites of Henry, Arques, and La Valette; better known in hiſtory by the titles of Joyeuſe and Epernon. They had already attained to the preeminence in the king's affections, and were the channel of every grace or preferment. After ſuſtaining a ſiege of ſix weeks, the governor of La Fere capitulated on honorable conditions (34).

Succeſs of the royal forces.

Siege of La Fere.

September.

The king of Navarre, who had imprudently engaged in a war ſo much above his ſtrength or reſources, was not more fortunate than his confederates. Unable to collect under his ſtandard, or to maintain in the field, any conſiderable body of troops; compelled to retire before marſhal Biron, who had paſſed the Garonne, and entered Gaſcony;

King of Navarre is purſued by Biron.

(34) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 396 and 397. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 227. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 367—370.

deſtitute

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destitute almost of a guard for the protection of his person, he was necessitated to take refuge in Nerac. Biron approached the place, drew up his army, and even fired some vollies of cannon against the town; while the queen of Navarre, like Helen on the walls of Troy, attended by the ladies of her court, occupied the watch towers and battlements, as spectators of the action. But, it was not the intention of the king of France to reduce to the last extremities, a prince so nearly allied to him by blood and marriage, in whom he beheld the only counterpoise to the power of the Guises and the League. Biron, after displaying his force, withdrew from the vicinity of Nerac; and a fall, by which he was, for some time, rendered incapable of personally commanding the troops committed to his charge, tended to impede his further progress (35).

1580. September.

Conclusion of peace.

In this desperate extremity of his affairs, the king of Navarre was saved by the interposition of the duke of Anjou. That prince having already accepted the offers of the states general of the Netherlands, by which, on certain conditions, they agreed to delegate to him the sovereignty, of which they had deprived Philip the Second; and anxious to obtain the assistance of the Hugonots, mediated their accommodation. The queen-mother, willing to aid the ambitious views of her youngest son, joined her powerful interceſſion; and Henry, who only desired repose, easily consented to open a treaty with his brother-in-law. It was conducted at the castle of Fleix, in Perigord, and suffered little impediment or delay. The articles of the preceding peace were renewed with some variation; and France, after a war of only a few months, was restored to tranquillity (36).

November.

(35) D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. ii. p. 364. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 389—393. Davila, p. 490 and 491.

(36) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 399. Davila, p. 491. D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. ii. p. 384. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 230.

No

No part of Europe, during this period, was so constantly desolated, or subject to such numerous and rapid revolutions, as the Netherlands. The Spanish affairs, which, at the decease of Don John of Austria, appeared to be almost beyond recovery, were speedily retrieved by the vigor and capacity of the new governor general. Not discouraged by the total want of pecuniary resources, by the general desertion of the provinces, or by the superior military force of the enemy; the Prince of Parma supplied every defect, by the energy of his mind, the promptitude of his movements, and the superiority of his genius. Equally fitted for the cabinet and for the field, his comprehensive talents embraced either department. Severe in the camp, he was mild and gentle in every act of private life; and his clemency was still more effectual in subduing, or regaining the Flemings, than his transcendent military capacity. The states of Brabant and Flanders having proceeded to form a new and closer union with the prince of Orange, for their mutual defence; the provinces of Haynault and Artois, apprehensive of the complete subversion of the Catholic religion, began to exhibit marks of a disposition to return to the obedience of Philip the Second. These favorable symptoms were encouraged and ultimately matured, by the wisdom and prudence of the prince of Parma. At the same time he undertook the siege of Maestricht, in order more effectually to preclude the future entry of German armies into the Low Countries; he continued, and concluded a treaty, by which, on condition of dismissing the Spanish troops, the Walloon provinces, comprehending Artois, Haynault, the city of Lisle, and several subordinate places, submitted anew to Spain. Maestricht, after a siege of four months, was entered by storm, the garrison and inhabitants, put to the sword, and the city completely reduced.

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1580.

Affairs of the Low Countries.

Character of the prince of Parma.

The Walloon provinces return to the obedience of Spain.

The

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1580.

Progreſs of the Spaniſh general.

The progreſs of the Spaniſh commander was aided by the diſſentions of the ſtates of Flanders, cauſed by religious diſputes; and his recent accommodation with the Walloons, ſhook the baſis of the independence of the Flemings. Having, not without extreme reluctance, and many delays, completed the evacuation of the Netherlands by the Spaniſh ſoldiery, in compliance with his engagements; he formed a new army with incredible celerity. La Noue, who commanded the combined forces of the States of France, after performing the moſt diſtinguiſhed ſervices, was defeated, and taken priſoner. The Spaniards, who regarded themſelves as invincible under the prince of Parma, carried terror thro' every part of the Netherlands; and if Philip the Second had not, in his ardor to attain the crown of Portugal, withheld the neceſſary ſupplies of money from his general in the Low Countries; an univerſal ſubmiſſion of thoſe provinces to their antient ſovereign, might, probably, have been effected (37).

June.

Treaty between the Flemings and the duke of Anjou.

Under theſe alarming circumſtances, the prince of Orange ſtrenuouſly exhorted the States, not to delay the concluſion of a treaty with the duke of Anjou, as the only competent barrier againſt the further inroads of the Spaniſh general. It was accelerated by the voluntary renunciation, on the part of the arch-duke Mathias, of the poſt of governor of the Netherlands, to which he had been called, and which he had, in effect, only nominally occupied. That prince, neglected by the Flemings, who had invited him; and poſſeſſing neither talents, authority, nor conſideration, withdrew ſoon afterwards into Germany. The definitive treaty between the duke of Anjou, and the ſtates of Brabant, Flanders,

Auguſt.

(37) Strada de Bel. Belg. vol. ii. p. 1—277. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 100—122, and 316—366.

Holland,

Holland, Zealand, and Friesland, with whom the cities of Antwerp and Mechlin were joined; was finally adjusted at the castle of Plessis, near Tours. The sovereignty of those rich and commercial provinces was conferred on him and his posterity, on the condition of being annexed to, but, not incorporated in, the French monarchy; and with a reservation of all their privileges and immunities. An army, to which the contracting parties agreed jointly to contribute, was to be immediately levied for their defence and protection. The peace between Henry the Third and his Hugonot subjects, was the consequence of this treaty; and the duke of Anjou exerted every effort, to carry it into vigorous execution. He obtained the indirect approbation of the king his brother, and issued orders to levy troops in every part of France (38).

CHAP. III. 1580. Articles of the treaty.

If the capacity of the French prince had been equal to his good fortune, a considerable portion of those opulent and maritime countries, extending from the frontiers of Picardy and Champagne, to the mouth of the Weser, might have been transferred to the house of Valois. But, the duke of Anjou, like his predecessor, the arch-duke Mathias, only represented the pageant of a sovereign, and was unqualified to effect so vast and arduous an atchievement, as the expulsion of the Spaniards from the Netherlands. The essential authority resided always in William, prince of Orange, whose depth of policy, and superior talents, had already cemented his independant supremacy over the northern provinces, Holland and Zealand. Irritated against him to the highest degree, and justly regarding the measure of calling in the duke of Anjou, as his peculiar act, Philip the Second no longer imposed any

Impediments to the progress of the duke of Anjou.

(38) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 336. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 228 and 229.

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restraint on his indignation against his revolted subject. In a public manifesto, dispersed by his command throughout all Europe, he proscribed the prince of Orange; stigmatized him with the epithets of traitor, rebel, and heretic; exposed his estates to pillage; and finally offered a reward of twenty thousand ducats, to any person who should bring him dead or alive. William was neither terrified nor depressed by this proscription, to which he replied by the apology that bears his name, and which in energy of composition is not inferior to the most celebrated works of antiquity. It was transmitted to the different European courts, and covered Philip with opprobrium, by the severe display which it contained of his vices, crimes, and enormities (39).

1580. June. Manifesto of the king of Spain.

December.

Affairs of Portugal.

While the fate of the Netherlands was still uncertain, that of Portugal was already decided. The insatiable ambition of Philip was gratified by the addition of a new kingdom, and of the rich colonies possessed by the Portugueze in Asia. All the discoveries made by Gama, and the conquests effected by Albuquerque, were carried into the house of Austria, and lost in the enormous mass of the Spanish monarchy. The reign of the cardinal Henry, who had succeeded to the unfortunate Sebastian, was of short continuance. He expired, after having nominally held the sceptre only seventeen months. The period was, notwithstanding, of sufficient length, to have secured the independance of his country; and to have named a successor, under whom Portugal might still retain her existence as a separate monarchy. But, the feeble age, and procrastinating or indecisive character of Henry, instead of terminating the contest between the various candidates, left it open to litigation. Catherine, duchess of

January.

Indecision of the cardinal king.

(39) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 362 and 363.

Braganza,

Braganza, daughter of a ſon of the great Emanuel, king of Portugal, appeared to poſſeſs a claim ſuperior to any other. It was, nevertheleſs, conteſted by Anthony, ſon to don Louis, ſecond ſon of Emanuel; and whoſe title would have been indiſputable, if his illegitimacy had not excluded him from the throne. Even this circumſtance, which was not poſitively eſtabliſhed, might have been ſurmounted, if Henry had not conceived for his nephew the moſt implacable averſion. The crown of Portugal had been worn by John the Firſt, notwithſtanding a ſimilar defect in blood; and the people, who pretended to a right of deciſion, where the claim was a doubtful one, were almoſt unanimouſly attached to Anthony. But, the great endowments of every kind, which had raiſed John the Firſt to the throne, and maintained him in it during a long and victorious reign, were not to be found in his deſcendant. Philip the Second, at the head of all the forces of the Spaniſh monarchy, prepared to enter the liſts, as a competitor; and he had, already, before the death of Henry, began to aſſemble troops upon the frontiers (40).

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Unequal as was the conteſt, it could by no means be regarded as deſperate. The king of Spain, however powerful, had many impediments, internal and foreign, to prevent his exerting with vigor, the reſources that he poſſeſſed. In Arragon, and in Navarre, ſymptoms of diſaffection had appeared. Naples and Milan groaned under the Spaniſh tyranny; while the Netherlands, in open revolt, defied the power, and drained the revenues of Philip. If the Portugueze had been united under any one leader, they might have rendered the attempt to ſubject the kingdom, difficult; perhaps, impoſſible. The fron-

Condition of the Spaniſh monarchy at this period.

(40) La Clede, Hiſt. de Port. vol. ii. p. 72—89.

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tiers towards Eſtremadura, where the Caſtilians muſt neceſſarily enter, were covered with fortreſſes, which would delay, or defeat their operations. The clergy, and the people, were zealouſly diſpoſed to maintain the independance of Portugal; and the nobility, though corrupted and ſeduced by the promiſes, or preſents of the Catholic king, did not want either valor, or patriotiſm. But, the diſſentions of the kingdom prevented every effort for its preſervation, and delivered it over, almoſt without reſiſtance, to the invaders. The duke of Braganza, timid, and unpopular, tamely bartered the rights which his wife poſſeſſed, and opened a negotiation with Philip. That artful prince did not loſe the occaſion of diſarming, and ſecuring ſo dangerous a rival. The five adminiſtrators, or regents, to whom the deceaſed king had committed by will, the government, till the conteſted ſucceſſion ſhould be finally determined, either ſold, or abandoned their truſt. No effectual opponent appeared, except Anthony; whoſe title was diſputable, and whoſe authority was not generally acknowledged. The duke of Alva, recalled from his caſtle, where he had been confined for ſome time, in a ſtate of diſgrace; aſſumed, at more than ſeventy years of age, the command of the army, deſtined to effect the conqueſt of Portugal. The high military reputation which he had acquired in Flanders; and, perhaps, the ſeverity of his diſpoſition, recommended him to a monarch, who, throughout the whole courſe of his reign, governed more by terror, than by affection. Wherever the Spaniſh commander appeared, treachery, fear, or diſaffection, opened to him the cities; and he penetrated, almoſt unoppoſed, to the gates of Liſbon itſelf. Having taken St. Ubes, one of the moſt important fortreſſes in the kingdom; and, afterwards, by a maſterly and rapid movement, having

Diſſentions in the kingdom of Portugal.

Entrance of the duke of Alva into Portugal.

June.

His progreſs.

having croſſed his forces over the Tagus, he prepared to inveſt the metropolis (41). CHAP. III. 1580.

Under theſe circumſtances of danger and depreſſion, Anthony did not abandon the conteſt; but, of the many perſonal qualities indiſpenſable to maintain him againſt ſo vaſt a diſparity, he poſſeſſed only courage. He even manifeſted a character deeply tinged with cruelty, treachery, and the moſt odious, or degrading vices. Incapable of commanding the ſervices, or compelling the attendance of the nobility; he truſted his cauſe to a licentious populace, who committed every act of violence with impunity, and deſolated the capital by their exceſſes. His army, deficient in diſcipline, and entirely compoſed of the vileſt of the people, inflamed by the exhortations of monks, ſcarcely waited to be attacked by the duke of Alva; and after a ſhort reſiſtance, fled on all ſides. Liſbon inſtantly capitulated, and admitted the Spaniards; while Anthony, reduced to wander through the provinces, and concealed by his adherents, at length found means to embark from a kingdom, the misfortunes of which he had only aggravated, by an ineffectual oppoſition. After eluding every attempt which Philip made to gain poſſeſſion of his perſon, and receiving the moſt inconteſtable proofs of the diſintereſtedneſs and attachment of his countrymen, who diſdained the rewards offered by the court of Madrid, for his apprehenſion; he embarked with a few attendants, from St. Ubes, and landed ſafely in France (42).

Ineffectual efforts of the prior of Crato.

Auguſt.

His flight.

That country was liberated from one of its moſt formidable enemies, nearly at the ſame period, by the death of Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy. He expired in the vigor of his age, having only at-

Death of Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy.

(41) La Clede, vol. ii. p. 89—120. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 221—270.

(42) La Clede, vol. ii. p. 121—128. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 271—280.

tained

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tained his fifty-second year. Conscious that the indolence and mal-administration of Henry the Third, were rapidly preparing a great revolution in his dominions; Emanuel Philibert already made dispositions for profiting of the dissentions of the kingdom. The death of Bellegarde had frustrated, or, at least, postponed his designs, upon the marquisate of Saluzzo; but, he did not renounce his projects of still further augmenting, and aggrandizing his power, at the expence of France. All his political and ambitious views survived in his son, Charles Emanuel, who succeeded to his father's courage and genius, as well as to his territories. The sixteenth century, fertile in illustrious princes, did not produce any more distinguished, than Emanuel Philibert. His good fortune in re-establishing himself in Savoy and Piedmont, from both of which his predecessor had been expelled, was equalled by his magnanimity, elevation of mind, and talents for government. If we except the intolerant and persecuting spirit, which was more the vice of the age, than of the individual, and which stimulated him to undertake, by violence, the conversion of his Protestant subjects; he was free from almost every defect, which could materially affect the happiness of his people. His superior military talents did not render him less disposed to cultivate the arts of peace; and under his administration, uninterrupted tranquillity was preserved throughout his dominions, while France, the Netherlands, and many of the finest countries of Europe were involved in all the calamities attendant on war. We may regard his reign as the era from which Savoy dates its political existence; and the troubles by which France was soon afterwards agitated, enabled his successor to adopt, and nearly to execute, the most extensive projects of ambition (43).

1580. August.

His character.

(43) Guichenon, Hist. de Savoye, vol. ii. p. 696 and 697. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 230 and 231.

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CHAP. IV.

Internal ſtate of France.—Profuſion, and mal-adminiſtration of the king.—Entry of the duke of Anjou into the Netherlands.—His firſt exploits.—He paſſes over into England.—Submiſſion of Portugal to Philip the Second.—The iſlands of Azores adhere to Anthony.—Return of the duke of Anjou to Flanders.—Attempt to aſſaſſinate the prince of Orange, by Jaureguy.—Conſpiracy of Salcede.—Naval expedition to the Azores.—Defeat of Strozzi.—Operations in the Low Countries.—Attempt of the duke of Anjou, upon Antwerp.—Conſequences of it.—Retreat of that prince into France.—Indolence and vices of Henry.—Inſtitution of the penitents.—Symptoms of an inſurrection in France.—Second enterprize againſt the Azores.—Progreſs of the prince of Parma in Flanders.—Death of the duke of Anjou.—Aſſaſſination, and character of the prince of Orange.

CHAP. IV. 1581.

State of France, and of the court.

WHILE, on one hand, the duke of Anjou, having ratified the treaty with the Flemings, aſſembled his forces, in order to enter the Netherlands; and while Philip the Second, in another quarter, prepared to take poſſeſſion of Portugal, already ſubjected; Henry, neither occupied by ſchemes of conqueſt, nor by ſyſtems of legiſlation, abandoned himſelf to a diſgraceful indolence. Equally inſenſible to the incitements of glory, or to the dictates of policy; neglectful of the intereſts, honor, and proſperity of France: improvident even of his own future repoſe, to the enjoyment of which, he made ſo many ſacrifices; he ſaw, without emotion, or effort, the formation of that ſtorm, in which

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1581.

which he was eventually ſwallowed up and loſt. The partizans of "the League," reſerving for a more propitious moment, the full diſcloſure and execution of their plan, ſilently laboured to cement and conſolidate all its component parts. The ſterility of the queen of France, and the general opinion diffuſed among the people, of the inaptitude of the king for the duties of marriage, rendered the proſpect of the ſucceſſion uncertain. The duke of Anjou was not yet married; and, even if ſucceſsful in his ſuit to Elizabeth, queen of England, the age of that princeſs made it highly improbable that ſhe ſhould ever have iſſue. Henry, king of Navarre, was equally deſtitute of any legitimate offſpring; and his religion formed, of itſelf, an inſuperable obſtacle to his aſcending the throne. Profiting of ſo many concurring circumſtances, the duke of Guiſe, whoſe ambitious views already ſeem to have embraced the future attainment of the crown itſelf, as a poſſible event; began to diſcloſe a part of his vaſt and extenſive plan. Among the princes of the blood, Charles, cardinal of Bourbon, younger brother of Anthony, and uncle of Henry, kings of Navarre, occupied a diſtinguiſhed rank. Of a limited capacity, and a ſuperſtitious diſpoſition, he was yet by no means inſenſible to the allurements or ſeductions of ambition. Sinking in years, and precluded by the priority of his nephew's pretenſions, from any expectation of attaining to the ſovereignty of France, in caſe of the entire extinction of the reigning houſe of Valois; he lent a ready ear to the ſuggeſtions of the duke of Guiſe, who flattered him, that his adherence of the Catholic faith, rendered him the only prince whom the nation would permit to ſway the ſceptre. Won by theſe artifices, he forgot the antient enmity of his family to the Guiſes, and ſuffered himſelf to be made

Projects of the duke of Guiſe.

He gains the confidence of the cardinal of Bourbon.

made the dupe and inſtrument of all their purpoſes (1). CHAP. IV.

Amidſt ſuch various and augmenting ſources of confuſion, the king proſecuted his accuſtomed diverſions, and encreaſed his ordinary expences. The court was no longer filled with counſellors of ſtate, and antient nobility, as it had been under Henry the Second, and Francis the Firſt. Young and inſolent favourites, raiſed by Henry, and promoted to the higheſt dignities, military and civil, eclipſed, and expelled the natural attendants on his perſon. The indecent and unreſtrained marks of affection, proſtituted on theſe minions, excited indignation, and were attributed to the moſt diſgraceful motives. Not ſatisfied with raiſing Arques and La Valette, to the rank of dukes, and attempting to eſtabliſh their pre-eminence above the oldeſt peerages of the kingdom; he deſtined for them the two princeſſes of Vaudemont, allied to the houſe of Lorrain, and ſiſters to the queen. The firſt of the two matches was actually accompliſhed; and Henry preſented to the bride, the ſame portion which was uſually given to a princeſs of France, amounting to three hundred thouſand ducats. The marriage of the duke of Epernon was delayed, on account of the youth of the princeſs, intended for him; but, Henry did not leſs, by anticipation, order a ſum of equal magnitude to be paid to the future huſband. Enormous as ſuch prodigality appeared, it was loſt in the ſtill greater profuſion, exhibited at the celebration of Joyeuſe's nuptials, which exceeded twelve hundred thouſand ducats (2), and were ſolemnized with more than royal magnificence (3).

1581. Profuſion and miſconduct of the king.

Minions of Henry.

A diſſipation of the public treaſure, ſo odious in itſelf, and which ſeemed to impeach, not only the

Rapacity and oppreſſion of the government.

(1) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 553.

(2) A ſum equal to five hundred thouſand pounds ſterling.

(3) Etoile, Journ. d'Henry III. p. 130. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 550 and 551.

king's

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king's conduct, but, even the ſanity of his intellects, could not be ſupported, without laying adequate burthens on the people. Every onerous, and oppreſſive impoſition, which the pernicious ingenuity of Italian financiers could deviſe, was accumulated upon the ſubject. In defiance of the reluctance and oppoſition, manifeſted by the parliament of Paris, a number of new pecuniary edicts, not ſhort of twenty-ſeven, were regiſtered in one day. By a ſingle edict of the liſt, twenty places of counſellors were created, in addition to thoſe already exiſting. Henry was neceſſitated to appear in perſon, in order to vanquiſh the repugnance of the parliament to ſanctify ſuch violation of juſtice and good government. To ſupply his exceſſes, and the rapacity of his favourites, venality was openly introduced into the magiſtrature, the courts of juſtice, and all the dignities or offices of the kingdom. The patience of the nation, wantonly trampled on, began to be nearly exhauſted; and even thoſe, whoſe loyalty and attachment to the crown remained unſhaken, yet foreſaw with apprehenſion the neceſſary conſequence of the vices and profligacy of the ſovereign (3).

July.

Exploits of the prince of Parma, in the Netherlands.

During the tranſactions in France, the Netherlands exhibited a more animating and important ſcene, on which the attention of Europe was fixed. The ſuperior talents and activity of the prince of Parma began gradually to re-eſtabliſh on a ſolid baſis, the Spaniſh power, in all the provinces to the ſouth of the Schelde and the Maeſe. His inviolable fidelity to his engagements, added to the ſeverity of his diſcipline, and his conſummate military ſkill, rendered his troops invincible. Having taken Breda, and cloſely inveſted Cambray, the ſtates of Flanders and Brabant, terrified at the rapidity of his

(3) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 233—236. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 55—.

progreſs,

progreſs, loudly invoked the duke of Anjou to accelerate his march to their aſſiſtance. That prince having, at length, aſſembled a body of near ten thouſand infantry, and four thouſand cavalry, entered Artois, and advanced to the relief of Cambray, which had already ſuffered the preſſure of famine. At his approach, the Spaniſh commander, whoſe forces were very inferior in number to thoſe of the French; after having remained for ſome hours in order of battle, decamped, and retreated towards Bouchain. The event juſtified this cautious meaſure, to which, in ſome degree, may be attributed the ſubſequent ill ſucceſs of the duke of Anjou. His army, principally compoſed of volunteers, and adventurers, equipped for a ſhort and vigorous expedition, and who received no regular pay, was unfit for enterprizes of duration. Licentious, undiſciplined, and ſubſiſting principally by plunder, they alienated the people, to whoſe aid they were arrived; and diſbanded, when weary of the campaign (4).

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1581. Duke of Anjou enters Artois. Auguſt.

State of his army.

The firſt ſucceſs of the duke of Anjou was, notwithſtanding, ſuch as to awaken the ſanguine expectations of his new ſubjects. He made his triumphal entry into Cambray, as a conqueror, and was received by the inhabitants as their liberator from ſlavery. The command of the place and of the citadel was conferred by him on Balagny, one of his followers. Purſuing his advantages, he drove the enemy from Arleux and Ecluſe, beſieged and captured Cateau in Cambreſis, and ſeemed to be ready to penetrate into Brabant. If he could have effected his junction with the forces of the States and of the prince of Orange, ſo great a ſuperiority might have enabled him to give battle to the prince of Parma, under circumſtances highly favorable. But,

His entrance into Cambray.

His troops diſband.

(4) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 238.

already,

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already, his ſoldiers, diſguſted with the delays and impediments interpoſed to their progreſs; impreſſed with little reſpect, or confidence in their commander; and diſdaining all ſubordination, had deſerted their ſtandards. Apprehenſive in his turn of being attacked by an enemy, whoſe vigilance and promptitude were fully known; he retired towards the French frontiers, having loſt more than half his cavalry, and nearly an equal number of infantry.

September.

Duke of Anjou paſſes over into England.

Incapable of renewing the attempt on Flanders, and ſtill occupied by his purſuit of Elizabeth, he quitted his army, and paſſed over into England; to which court Henry the Third had diſpatched a magnificent embaſſy, in the view of facilitating his brother's nuptials. During his abſence, the prince of Parma, no longer reſtrained by the operations of ſo formidable an opponent, inveſted Tournay, rendered himſelf maſter of the place, after a ſiege of two months, and ſpread conſternation over every part of Flanders and Brabant (5).

November.

Reduction of Portugal to the obedience of Philip the Second.

Brilliant as was the ſucceſs of Philip's arms in the Netherlands, conducted by his lieutenants; it was ſurpaſſed by the facility, with which, in his own perſon, he completed the ſubjection of the Portugueze. Wherever he appeared, the moſt profound obedience was manifeſted; and in the aſſembly of the ſtates of the kingdom, held at Tomar, he was proclaimed king, with all the accuſtomed ſolemnities. The crown was declared to be hereditary in his family: an amneſty, from which Anthony, and his principal adherents were excluded, was publiſhed; and the privileges of the nation were confirmed.

April.

June. Philip enters Liſbon.

Continuing his progreſs, the new king entered Liſbon, was inaugurated with pomp, and received by the fickle and credulous populace, with

(5) Strada, vol. iii. p. 278—358. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 519—521. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 236—238.

loud

loud acclamations. His deportment, and measures on his accession, were calculated to sooth the discontent, and to allay the apprehensions of his subjects. The duke of Braganza was treated with external marks of consideration: the university of Coimbra, which had distinguished itself by the warmest opposition to Philip's claims, received, notwithstanding, testimonies of his protection and forgiveness. Honors, and employments, were conferred, though with a sparing hand, on some of the grandees; and the administration was vested in ministers of talents and discernment (6). CHAP. IV. 1581.

Throughout the vast dependencies of Portugal, in Asia, Africa, and on the southern continent of America, no opposition was made to a revolution, which reduced the kingdom to a province of the Spanish monarchy. The numerous colonies on the coast of Guinea; the garrisons on the shore of Barbary; Madeira, and the islands of Cape Verd, submitted without a murmur. Ataide, viceroy of the Indies, who might have repelled the utmost efforts of Philip, acknowledged his title; and the rich fleet returning from Goa, entered the Tagus, and brought to the Spanish monarch an immense accession of wealth, at a juncture the most critical. Amidst so astonishing and general a submission, the islands of the Azores alone ventured to refuse obedience to Philip; and with the exception of only one, adhered inflexibly to his competitor. Their position in the Atlantic, nearly midway between the old and the new world; together with the utility derived from the refreshments and shelter, which they afforded to the fleets from the Indies and Brasil, on their homeward-bound voyages; rendered their possession highly important. Philip, too wise not to be fully sensible of their value; and too vigilant to lose

Submission of the Portugueze colonies.

The islands of the Azores remain firm to Anthony.

(6) La Clede, vol. ii. p. 129—132. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 482—489.

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1581.

lose a moment in attempting to reduce them; sent a squadron, commanded by Valdez, followed by a second, under Figueroa, to effect their conquest. But, the expeditions were completely unsuccessful.—

Repulse of Valdez.

Valdez, repulsed in an attack upon Angra, capital of the island of Tercera, was reduced to fly before the inhabitants, after having sustained a considerable loss. Elated by their victory, they proceeded to the most violent excesses of rage against the Spaniards; nor did Figueroa, discouraged by the recent defeat of his predecessor, venture to renew the experiment. He returned, therefore, to Lisbon, in order to demand supplies; while the insurgents dispatched messengers to Anthony, then in the court of France, to assure him of their inviolable adherence, and to press for instant succour (7).

1582.

Consequences of the duke of Anjou's visit to England.

The visit of the duke of Anjou to England, was not accompanied with greater success, than had attended his former attempt to attain the hand of Elizabeth. She received him with every demonstration of amity and affection; permitted the articles respecting their future nuptials, to be discussed; and even proceeded so far as to present him with a ring, in token of her fidelity and consent. But, these deceptive appearances, calculated to answer the political purposes of the queen, and to retard, or prevent an alliance between the French prince and a daughter of Philip the Second; were laid aside, when the object was attained. Wearied, if not disgusted with perpetual procrastination; and pressed by the importunity of the prince of Orange, to revisit the Netherlands, where his presence was so necessary; he took leave of Elizabeth. Escorted by the English fleet, and attended by a number of the nobility, he set sail for the port of Flushing, in Zealand; and after having made a short stay at Mid-

He returns to Flanders.

February.

(7) La Clede, vol. ii. p 132—135. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 490—494.

dleburg;

dleburg, capital of the province, he proceeded by sea, to Antwerp. In that city, he was solemnly invested with the dignity of duke of Brabant. The States swore allegiance to him as their rightful sovereign, and delegated to him the prerogatives exercised by their antient masters. He, in return, took an oath to govern by the established laws, and to respect inviolably all their privileges (8). CHAP. IV. 1582. His investiture.

The general joy, diffused by this happy event, which promised their entire emancipation from the tyranny of Philip the Second, was, notwithstanding, interrupted, and nearly extinguished, by an attempt to assassinate the prince of Orange. Jaureguy, a young Biscayan, allured on one hand, by the rewards which the king of Spain offered; and stimulated by religious enthusiasm, on the other; undertook to execute so detestable a deed. Having chosen the moment when the prince, accompanied by his friends, had risen from table, and was preparing to withdraw into his own apartment, he discharged a pistol ball, which entering under his right ear, passed through his cheek. The wound, though March. severe, was not mortal: but, the assassin having been put to death by those who were present, in the first transports of their indignation; a suspicion that the French, and even the duke of Anjou himself, had authorized the commission of the act, spread universally through Antwerp. The citizens, who idolized the prince of Orange, ran instantly to arms, and were on the point of taking vengeance on the sovereign whom they had recently elected, before it could be ascertained from what quarter the blow had been aimed. Two accomplices of Jaureguy, Spaniards as well as himself, were either seized and executed, or took refuge in the prince of Parma's camp. The prince of Orange recovered of his Attempt to assassinate the prince of Orange.

(8) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 600—605. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 240.

wound;

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wound; and the conſternation, occaſioned by it, inſenſibly diſappeared (9).

1582. Campaign in the Netherlands.

Meanwhile, the campaign which began to open, produced no events deciſive of the fate of the Netherlands. The Spaniſh general, notwithſtanding his conſummate knowledge of the art of war, was reſtrained by the want of forces, from undertaking to attack the enemy. Nor did the duke of Anjou, whoſe troops were with difficulty retained under their ſtandards, venture to hazard an engagement againſt a commander, whoſe reputation inſpired terror and reſpect. In this ſituation, the prince of Parma, profiting with dexterity of the inroads made by the French on the provinces of Artois and Haynault, and of their inability to provide for their own defence without foreign aſſiſtance; obtained the conſent of the nobility to demand from Philip the Second, the recal of the Spaniſh bands. Their requeſt was eagerly granted by the court of Madrid; while the duke of Anjou, with equal impatience, expected a powerful reinforcement from France, under the conduct of the duke of Montpenſier (10).

State of France.

That kingdom, ſince the treaty concluded with the Hugonots, continued to enjoy a fallacious and precarious repoſe, interrupted at intervals, by diſturbances between the Catholics and Proteſtants, irritated againſt each other. The king, faintly actuated by ſentiments of national glory, rather permitted, than approved, or ſupported, the enterprizes of his brother. Too indolent, and too timid, to venture on ſo deciſive a meaſure as an open rupture with the Spaniſh monarch; he was ſtill induced to lend an indirect aſſiſtance to every effort, which might impede, or overturn the courſe of

Indolence of the king.

(9) Strada, vol. viii. p. 366—370. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 608—614.
(10) Strada, vol. viii. p. 372—377. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 607 and 608.

Philip's

Philip's prosperity. Destitute of pecuniary resources; devoured by rapacious favorites; and little inclined to sacrifice his own tranquillity, to the gratification of the duke of Anjou's ambitious views in Flanders; Henry listened with coolness to his solicitations, and affected to maintain a strict neutrality. But, the king of Spain was neither deceived by his protestations, nor mollified by his conduct. Taxis, his embassador at the court of France, had already entered into the deepest and most criminal intrigues, with the princes of the family of Guise; and an event, which took place at this period, disclosed in their full extent, the enormity and treasonable nature of their designs. CHAP. IV. 1582.

Among the numerous adventurers, whom the prospect of honor or advantage, attracted to the duke of Anjou's court, at Bruges in Flanders, was Nicholas Salcede. He was of Spanish extraction, had been compelled to fly from France on account of his crimes, and might justly be suspected of adherence to the enemies of that country. But, Salcede having offered to the duke a regiment, levied at his own expence, and ready to join the French troops, was received with caresses, and treated with distinction. The prince of Orange, whose vigilant and penetrating mind was ever awake to the events that passed around him; and who had discovered that Salcede, on his way to Bruges, visited the prince of Parma's camp; first entertained doubts concerning his intentions. Enquiry confirmed them; and some other indications of his guilt appearing, he was arrested, committed to prison, and strictly interrogated. His voluntary confession, made in presence of the duke of Anjou, revealed a plot so vast, complicated, and which involved in it such a number of eminent persons in the court of France, that it was judged indispensable to communicate the information to Henry Conspiracy of Salcede. July. His confession.

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the Third (11). That prince, equally terrified and aſtoniſhed at a diſcloſure, which ſo nearly affected his own ſafety, cauſed Salcede to be tranſported to Paris, with every requiſite precaution. On the arrival of the criminal, the king directed judges to examine him, and was even preſent himſelf, concealed behind a curtain, when he was put to the torture. He varied at different times, in his depoſitions; denied, retracted, and again confirmed his original aſſertions; leaving the king and all his miniſters, in a ſtate of uncertainty as to the exact truth of many eſſential circumſtances, reſpecting the conſpiracy. But, the exiſtence and reality of a plot, which had for its object the dethronement of Henry, the extermination of the royal family, the introduction of the Spaniards, and the complete deſtruction of the French monarch, was apparent and demonſtrated. It was equally clear, that the Guiſes, in conjunction with the duke of Lorrain, were its immediate authors: that Philip the Second ſupported it with all his treaſures: that many provinces of the kingdom were engaged in it; and that meaſures were embraced for carrying it into prompt and vigorous execution. Any other prince than Henry, after ſo minute a diſcloſure of the pernicious ſchemes of his domeſtic and foreign enemies, would have exerted ſome vigilance, in endeavouring to prevent their further progreſs. But, ſuch was his credulous and ſupine ſecurity, that, when his firſt impreſſions of terror had ſubſided, he reſumed his ordinary courſe of amuſements, and took no meaſure for averting the danger with which he was menaced (12).

Security of Henry.

This

(11) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 569—573.

(12) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 621—636. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 242—244. Buſbeq. de Bong. letter 8th.

The moſt curious and intereſting detail of Salcede's conſpiracy, is to be found in De Thou. It is impoſſible, on a full conſideration of all the circumſtances,

This fatal and inexplicable apathy was the more cenſurable, as, notwithſtanding his affectation of obſerving inviolate the peace with Spain, he had attempted to wound the Spaniſh monarchy in its moſt vulnerable quarter. Anthony, who claimed the crown of Portugal, after embarking from a

CHAP. IV.

1582. Enterprize againſt the Azores.

cumſtances, to doubt that the duke of Guiſe had communicated to Salcede the leading facts, reſpecting the future projects of "the League." Not only a number of perſons of the higheſt quality were enumerated by him, as acquainted with, or implicated in, the treaſonable deſigns againſt the king, and kingdom: but, even ſeveral of thoſe, who had been raiſed, and peculiarly favoured by Henry. Among theſe, was the duke of Joyeuſe himſelf. Salcede's retraction may impugn the truth of ſome facts: but, cannot deſtroy the evidence of a deep and dangerous intention to ſubvert the monarchy, and deliver up France to Philip the Second. The conduct of the duke of Guiſe, and the ſubſequent diſcloſure of the principles of his adherents, bear the ſtrongeſt teſtimony to the general veracity of Salcede's depoſitions. The advice given to Henry, by Chriſtopher de Thou, father to the celebrated hiſtorian, and who, as firſt preſident of the parliament of Paris, was preſent at the examination of the criminal, was full of wiſdom and ſagacity. That virtuous and upright magiſtrate beſought the king, to detain Salcede in confinement, and by no means to put him to death, "If," ſaid he, "the intentions attributed to the duke of Guiſe and his par-"tizans, are falſe, their future conduct will beſt evince their innocence: "but, if the allegations of Salcede are true, they will be retained "in awe, by the conſciouſneſs of a witneſs being alive, who is acquainted "with, and can divulge the extent of their criminal projects." Henry was incapable of feeling, or of following, ſo judicious a mode of action. His indolence, and averſion to trouble, made him deſire to forget a ſubject of ſuch unpleaſing reflection; and thoſe of his favorites, or miniſters, who had been involved in the accuſation, urged the puniſhment of a traitor and calumniator. He was torn in pieces by horſes, and the king was preſent at his execution.

The death of the firſt preſident, de Thou, who only ſurvived this event ſeven days, was accelerated, if not occaſioned, by a deep and melancholy ſenſe of the calamities, which he foreſaw were about to overwhelm France; but, which he could not avert. It was in vain, that he warned Henry of the approaching and imminent danger: that infatuated monarch was deaf to his ſuggeſtions, or exhortations. De Thou, only a few months preceding, had, with a generous and manly boldneſs, withſtood ſome of the oppreſſive taxes, continually impoſed by the king; and he had the courage to warn him, that "if thoſe ruinous experiments were repeated, a revolt would be "the infallible conſequence." Henry, turning to his courtiers, by whom he was ſurrounded; ſaid, with contempt, "the poor old man is in his "dotage." But, when, only a few years afterwards, the ſedition of Paris began to manifeſt itſelf, he diſcovered the irreparable loſs which he had ſuſtained in de Thou. He deplored it with tears; and while, on every ſide, he only beheld treachery, rebellion, ingratitude, and perfidy, he was frequently heard to exclaim, "he was perſuaded, if the firſt preſident had been alive, "and at the head of the parliament, an inſurrection would never have "taken place in the capital."

CHAP. IV. 1582.

kingdom in which his affairs were desperate, obtained not only an asylum, but, a support, from the generosity of the French king. As his party still subsisted in the islands of the Azores, he earnestly solicited a naval and military force, to effect their complete reduction; and from thence, to make, with advantage, a new attempt to eject Philip from his recent conquest. Catherine of Medicis, whose predominant passion was ambition, and who had not even hesitated, on grounds the most absurd, to lay claim, herself, to the kingdom of Portugal, obtained leave from Henry, to equip, in her own name, an armament adequate to the enterprize. A considerable fleet, on board of which were five thousand soldiers, was fitted out from the harbours of France.

Naval force equipped, and sent to those islands.

The command was entrusted to Philip Strozzi, one of the most intrepid and accomplished officers in the French service; and not only Anthony himself, but, a number of the young nobility eagerly crouded to partake of the honor and danger of the expedition.

Spanish fleet fitted out by Philip.

Philip, attentive to all the motions of so formidable a squadron, instantly prepared to meet it with an equal or superior force. The marquis of Santa Croix sailed from the Tagus, at the head of a numerous and well-appointed fleet, nearly about the same period of time

June.

15th July.

that Strozzi quitted the coast of Brittany: but, the French arriving first at the place of their destination, landed on the island of St. Michael, defeated a body of Spaniards, gained possession of the principal town, and drove the enemy to take refuge in the citadel.

Success of the French.

If the favorable moment had been vigorously improved, and the garrison, which was in want of provisions, had not been allowed to recover from their consternation, Anthony might have been master of the fortress. Its consequence and importance were beyond calculation; the island of St. Michael being the only one which remained attached to Philip; and the Spanish fleet possessing no other port, or

or place of refreſhment and retreat. Unfortunately, the occaſion was loſt, while Anthony amuſed himſelf by liſtening to the acclamations of a populace, who ſaluted him king; and the arrival of Santa Croix, in a few days, ſoon changed the aſpect of affairs (13). 1582. 22d July.

An engagement became unavoidable between the two fleets, and it was expected by both with equal impatience. The conteſt was long and obſtinate, as the prize was not leſs than the kingdom of Portugal. Strozzi behaved with the utmoſt valour; and if he had been ſuſtained with the ſame firmneſs, muſt have obtained a deciſive victory. But, the ſuperior magnitude of the enemy's ſhips, and the ſeverity of their fire, added to the treachery, or cowardice of ſeveral French commanders, who never came into action, determined the fate of the day. Strozzi, wounded in the knee, and incapable of reſiſtance, was preſented to the Spaniſh admiral, who had the inhumanity to order him to be diſpatched, and his body to be thrown into the ſea. Two thouſand of the French were killed, and eight of their veſſels were captured, on this memorable occaſion. But, the cruelty, exerciſed by the marquis of Santa Croix, on the priſoners, who ſurvived, and who fell into his hands; while it tarniſhed ſo brilliant an atchievement, ſtamped indelible infamy on his name and nation. Theſe unfortunate victims, to the number of near three hundred, among whom were many perſons of quality and reputation, were conducted to Villa Franca, in the iſland of St. Michael. A ſcaffold having been conſtructed in the town, they were all deliberately put to death, with no other diſtinction, except that the officers were beheaded, while the common ſoldiers ſuffered by the halter. To palliate, or juſtify

Naval victory of the Spaniards.

26th July.

Cruelties exerciſed by the Spaniſh admiral.

(13) La Clede, vol. ii. p. 135—139. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 578—584.

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an act of such turpitude, the admiral pretended to consider the French as only pirates, or corsairs, acting without any legitimate commission, and wantonly infringing the peace subsisting between the two kings. Even his own troops could not acquiesce in so base and savage a proceeding: they demanded with importunity and tears, that the French might be treated as prisoners of war; but, Santa Croix, inexorable, delivered them over to the executioners; and Philip expressed neither horror, nor indignation, when he received the intelligence (14).

It was the first general engagement fought between any European nations, on the Atlantic, since the discovery of America, by Columbus; and its consequences were decisive of the fate of Portugal.

Incapacity of Anthony.

Anthony, who had not been personally present in the action, took refuge in the island of Tercera, which still adhered to his cause. Inconsolable on hearing the news of Strozzi's defeat, he only recovered from the transports of his grief, to plunge into the most degrading excesses of vice and sensuality. After remaining near two months in this state, irresolute as to his future conduct, and destitute of all resource, he embarked a second time for France: the Spanish admiral, satisfied with his victory, and cautious of remaining too long in an exposed situation, returned in triumph to Lisbon (15).

October.

Affairs of the Low Countries.

While these great events were performed upon the ocean, hostilities continued uninterruptedly in the Netherlands. Reinforced by the Spanish and Italian veterans, the prince of Parma took the field at the head of thirty thousand troops, and attempted to oppose the entry of the French, who, under Montpensier and Biron, having embarked from

(14) La Clede, vol. ii. p. 139—142. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 247—249. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 585—593.

(15) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 250.

Calais,

Calais, had joined the duke of Anjou, at Dunkirk. The reinforcement which they conducted, did not fall ſhort of eight thouſand infantry and cavalry, compoſed of Switzers and Germans, as well as of the forces of France. The Spaniſh general, nevertheleſs, did not heſitate to give them battle; and even under the cannon of Ghent, to which they retired, he obtained a conſiderable advantage: but, the approach of winter, and the difficulty of ſubſiſting two armies in a country already exhauſted, produced an involuntary ceſſation of hoſtilities. Notwithſtanding the exertions made by Philip, to enable the prince of Parma to puſh the war with vigor, and the great augmentations of ſoldiery which he had received, he found himſelf involved in almoſt inſurmountable embarraſſments. The court of Madrid, attentive to the preſervation of Portugal, and occupied in the Azores, did not remit to the Low Countries, ſufficient ſums for the payment of the numerous forces acting in that quarter. The provinces of Haynault and Artois, from which the principal ſupplies of proviſions were derived, could no longer furniſh reſources. Famine deſolated the Spaniſh camp, and reduced its numbers; while the duke of Anjou, maſter of the rich tract extending from Ghent to Antwerp, and receiving conſtant ſuccors from England and France by means of the ſea, was not expoſed to ſimilar diſtreſs; and might open the enſuing campaign with a proſpect of deciſive advantages. But, all theſe flattering appearances, which would probably have been realized in a few months, were completely overturned by his own raſhneſs, folly, and preſumption (16).

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1582. Hoſtilities. Auguſt.

Critical ſtate of the Netherlands.

(16) Strada. vol. iii. p. 394—407. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 640. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 252 and 253.

Henry

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Apathy of Henry.

Henry the Third, who, on account of the danger with which he was perſonally menaced by the conſpiracy of Salcede, rather than from public conſiderations, had evinced ſome degree of emotion, at that event; was little affected by the defeat and cataſtrophé of Strozzi. Inſenſible to national glory or ſhame, he neither betrayed reſentment, nor attempted to take vengeance for ſo cruel an outrage. Equally indiſpoſed to embrace the favorable occaſion which preſented itſelf, for diminiſhing the power of Philip in the Netherlands; he refuſed to liſten to the entreaties and ſolicitations of his brother, who implored his aſſiſtance. The duke of Anjou had already expended his revenues, and even contracted an immenſe debt, in the proſecution of his enterprize in Flanders. Every motive of affection, honor, and intereſt, dictated to the king to ſupport him in an attempt, ſo beneficial to France, and ſo injurious to Spain. He was well aware, that the court of Madrid, far from reſpecting either alliances of blood, or the faith of treaties, had kindled, and continued to feed the flame of civil diſſentions in his own dominions. Even the laws of nations, and of humanity, had been violated in the treatment of the unfortunate priſoners, taken at the Azores. Yet, ſo many conſiderations could not rouſe him to exertion, nor induce him to quit the diſgraceful and ruinous ſloth, in which he was ſunk. Far from extending the neceſſary aid to his brother, which might have enabled him to become maſter of the Netherlands, and to encloſe the prince of Parma between two ſuperior armies; his favorites dictated to him a language of inſult, in all his replies. The new duke of Brabant was adviſed to take warning by the fate of his predeceſſor, Mathias; who, after having been invited by the Flemings, to aſſume their government and protection, had been diſgracefully ſent back to Vienna. It was added, that when the duke had repreſſed the inſolent

His neglect of the duke of Anjou.

insolent audacity of his subjects, extended the narrow limits of his authority, and secured its permanency by the seizure of some fortresses or cities of Flanders; it might then be expedient and practicable, to mix the sovereign and kingdom of France in his quarrel (17).

Condition of that prince's affairs.

Insinuations and exhortations of such a nature, however originating in aversion or contempt, found too easy an access to the heart of a prince, corrupted by flattery, wounded by refusals, and stimulated by necessity. On repeated occasions, he had experienced the insolence of the Flemings; and at the assassination of the prince of Orange by Jaureguy, his own person, and those of all his countrymen, had been in the most imminent peril, from the suspicions entertained of his having authorized, or permitted the attempt. Continual disputes and altercations arose between the French and their allies, who, far from coalescing cordially, though engaged in one common pursuit, regarded each other almost as enemies. The duke himself, surrounded by unprincipled and profligate men, who continually held up to him the comparison between the unlimited prerogative of a king of France, and the contracted power delegated to him as duke of Brabant; inflamed and propelled him to encrease it by every means.

He determines to seize the principal cities of Flanders.

Yielding to these natural, but, pernicious suggestions, he, without communicating his design to Montpensier, or Biron, who might have dissuaded him from so treacherous a breach of faith; gave orders to seize, on the same day, a number of places in Flanders. The enterprize was facilitated by the confidence reposed in the French, as auxiliaries; and it was completely successful in the towns of Dunkirk, Dixmude, Alost, Menin, Vilvorden, and Dendermonde: but, at Ostend, and at Bruges, the conspiracy was

(17) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 253 and 254.

rendered

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rendered abortive. Having reserved to himself the conduct of the attempt upon Antwerp, as the most important and arduous, he marched out of the city on the day appointed, under the pretence of reviewing his forces, who were encamped in the neighbourhood. When he had reached the gate, the officers who accompanied him, began the onset; and the duke continuing his route to the camp, exhorted the troops to enter Antwerp, and to make themselves masters of the place. They obeyed with alacrity; and while their comrades seized on the cannon, they pushed forward to share in the pillage of so opulent a city. But, their own security was fatal to the enterprize; and some suspicions having been previously entertained of an intention to introduce the French, the citizens sounded the alarm, and rose in arms. The prince of Orange, who occupied the citadel, informed of the event, put himself at the head of a body of soldiers, attacked Fervaques, who commanded the duke of Anjou's troops, took him prisoner, and committed him to custody. Dispirited by the loss of their chief, his followers gave way on all sides; and as the croud was such at the gate by which they had originally entered, that it became impossible to retreat, a prodigious slaughter ensued. Numbers were suffocated by the pressure of their companions; and it was long, before the rage of the people, justly excited by such an act of perfidy, permitted any quarter to be extended. Yet, equally placable when all farther resistance had ceased, they evinced the utmost humanity in the treatment shewn to the wounded, and preserved the survivors from injury. About one hundred citizens fell in the affray; but on the other side, more than twelve hundred individuals perished, among whom were many persons of distinction (18).

18th January.

Attempt upon Antwerp;

unsuccessful

Carnage of the French.

(18) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 32—40. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 255—258. Busbeq. de Bongars, letters 14 and 15. Strada, vol. iii. p. 412—425.

During

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1583.

During the commiſſion of this tragical ſcene, the duke of Anjou, little prepared for its iſſue, remained at an inconſiderable diſtance from the walls, and already anticipated the poſſeſſion of Antwerp. He was accompanied by his principal officers, many of whom highly condemned the proceeding, as equally diſhonorable and deſtructive. The cannon of the city, pointed againſt him, and the ſight of numbers of French, who precipitated themſelves from the ramparts, in order to effect their eſcape, conveyed to the duke the firſt intelligence of the ill ſucceſs of his attempt. Confuſed, and covered with ſhame, he inſtantly withdrew to his camp; from whence he diſpatched letters to the States, extenuating the act; imputing it to the treatment which he had received, and the indignities that he had ſuffered; proteſting his affection for the Flemings, and his repentance for the attack made on their freedom. No anſwer was returned; nor would the Senate, though urged by the prince of Orange to ſend ſupplies of proviſions to the French army, permit any to be conveyed for ſeveral days. Such was their indignation, that they even cauſed the ſluices to be opened, inundated the whole country, and thereby reduced the duke to the laſt extremity of danger and famine. He was compelled, by a circuitous and hazardous march, to gain Dendermonde, where he did not arrive, without having loſt many of his ſoldiers (19).

Conduct of the duke of Anjou.

He retreats to Dendermonde.

The conſternation and reſentment, excited in Flanders and Brabant, by ſo daring an invaſion of their liberties, from a quarter to which the people naturally looked for protection and ſupport, was general, and difficult to eraſe. Its effects were as ſubverſive of the independance of thoſe provinces, as they were ruinous to the newly-acquired dominion of the duke of Anjou. Mutual confidence between

Conſequence of theſe proceedings.

(19) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 40—44.

the

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the two nations, was not only extinct; but, enmity and rancour subsisted in their place. The prince of Parma, relieved by so unexpected an interposition of fortune, from his pecuniary distresses, and from the difficulty of taking the field against superior forces; profited of the event, to open a negotiation with the revolted cities, and offered them, in the name of their antient sovereign, an amnesty for every offence, together with the most favorable conditions. These proposals, operating on minds inflamed by recent injury, and implacable against their late allies, were eventually productive of no inconsiderable effect (20).

Efforts made to effect a reconciliation.

Every effort was, notwithstanding, made to heal the wound, and to prevent the fatal consequences of a final rupture between the two parties. Henry the Third himself, alarmed at the effects which such an event might occasion, by the contumely and degradation in which it involved the name and nation of France, sent embassadors to mediate an accommodation. The prince of Orange, although included personally in the attempt of the duke of Anjou, which was levelled as much against him, as against the city of Antwerp; yet, displayed equal magnanimity and wisdom, in the advice given by him to the States. In a beautiful and masterly address, he enumerated the dangers annexed to every other mode of conduct; the impossibility of submitting anew to Philip the Second; the inability of the Flemings to sustain a contest with so powerful a monarch, unless assisted by foreign states; and the prodigious advantages derived from the co-operation and support of a French prince, presumptive heir to the crown. These weighty considerations, added to the danger of the duke's delivering up to the Spaniards the

(20) Strada, vol. iii. p. 426—433. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 43 and 44.

places

places of which he was in poſſeſſion, if driven to deſpair, produced a treaty; but could not obliterate the recollection of ſo perfidious a breach of honor and humanity. It was ſtipulated, that he ſhould repair immediately to Dunkirk, there to await a final reconciliation; and that Dendermonde, as well as Dixmude, ſhould be ſurrendered to the States; who, on their parts, engaged to reſtore his baggage, and all the priſoners taken at Antwerp, without ranſom. A mutual oblivion of every paſt event, formed the concluding article of the accommodation (21).

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1583. 2d April. Treaty of oblivion concluded.

The terms were executed on the part of the duke, without delay; but, the States manifeſted in all their movements, a ſentiment of inſurmountable averſion to the French. They even permitted it to operate to the prejudice and ruin of their own affairs; which, no longer ſupported by any confidence in their allies, became daily more perplexing and alarming. Encouraged by ſuch proofs of diſunion, the prince of Parma recommenced his military operations, and acquired the moſt deciſive advantages; while Biron, who commanded the troops of France, was impeded, or checked in every attempt. No cordial forgiveneſs took place; nor could any aſſurances of contrition and ſorrow, on the part of the duke of Anjou, affect a reunion with his offended ſubjects. That miſguided prince, dejected in mind, fallen from his elevation, abandoned in a great meaſure, by his brother, and become an object of deriſion to the Spaniards; after languiſhing near two months at Dunkirk, embarked for France. The city was immediately inveſted by the enemy, and ſurrendered in a few days. Biron, who might have compelled them to raiſe the ſiege, was not permitted to march to its reſcue, from the jealouſy and diſtruſt

Reſentment of the Flemings.

Return of the duke of Anjou into France. 18th June.

(21) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 45—54. Buſbeq. de Bong. letters 15 and 16.

of

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of the Flemings. The prince of Parma rapidly made himſelf maſter of Dixmude, and Nieuport; menaced Oſtend; beſieged Ypres; and already approached Antwerp itſelf. Ghent, the inhabitants of which had been the moſt eager to invoke the aſſiſtance of the French; with the inconſtancy always characteriſtic of their conduct, were the firſt to betray a diſpoſition to return to the obedience of Spain. The people of Antwerp, irritated perſonally againſt the duke of Anjou, aroſe tumultuouſly on the ſlighteſt pretences, and were ſcarcely to be reſtrained from taking vengeance on thoſe of his countrymen, who remained in Flanders. To augment their diſcontent, the Spaniſh general quartered his troops in their immediate vicinity, which had long been exempt from military ravage and contribution. The popularity of the prince of Orange himſelf, could not be maintained againſt the tide of obloquy and ill fortune; nor was he exempt from the ſevereſt animadverſions, for his attachment to the French alliance. Warned by the ſymptoms of ſo ſerious a change in the opinions of the people, he determined to withdraw into Zealand; a reſolution which he ſpeedily executed. After his departure, he continued to exhort the Flemings to retain Biron, who ſtill commanded a conſiderable body of troops; and he diſpatched meſſengers to the principal cities, to enforce its expediency. But, all exertions were fruitleſs, to vanquiſh the reſentment for injuries ſo deep and recent: a decree was iſſued, enjoining the French to quit the Low Countries: and Biron, in compliance with it, embarking his forces, joined the duke of Anjou ſoon afterwards in the neighbourhood of Cambray, where he attempted to re-aſſemble an army. Such was the unfortunate termination of an enterprize, which had for its object the tranſfer of the Netherlands to a prince of France; and which, conducted by a ſkilful and able hand, might have

1583. Rapid progreſs of the prince of Parma.

Retreat of the prince of Orange into Zealand. July.

Auguſt.

Evacuation of the Low Countries, by the French.

have materially affected and changed the face of Europe. The precipitation and treachery of the sovereign whom the Flemings had elected, overturned the foundations of his future grandeur; and by a natural transition, operated powerfully in facilitating the final return of the Low Countries, to the obedience of Philip the Second (22). 1583.

Fermentation in France.

While these sinister events took place in Flanders, the seeds of civil dissention, under the misguided and pusillanimous management of the king, were attaining rapidly to maturity in France. The exertions which he had made in order to extricate his brother, and to re-establish the harmony that had subsisted previous to the attempt upon Antwerp, had neither been produced by affection, nor esteem. On the contrary, Henry, only anxious to prolong his indolent and dissipated mode of life, regarded the projects of the duke of Anjou as subversive of his own repose, to which he sacrificed every consideration of public honor, or utility. Instead of correcting, and amending the errors, which had rendered him justly an object of aversion, or of contempt, to his people; all the vices of his character acquired force, as he advanced in age. Taxes, multiplied and augmented, far from enriching the royal treasury, left him needy, and incapable of opposing the designs of his enemies. The factions of his court and kingdom became annually more visible, and appeared to hasten to a crisis. Terrified at the prospect, and conscious that he had no refuge in the attachment or veneration of his subjects; he tried to find an asylum in the majesty of the throne itself. He encreased his guards; no longer appeared in public, as he had been accustomed, without attendants; and attempt-

Incapacity, and misconduct of Henry.

His feeble precautions, and measures.

(22) Strada, vol. iii. p. 435—452. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 260—262. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 55—61. Busbeq. letters 17—24. passim. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. ii. p. 475—477.

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ed, if he could not conciliate affection, to inſpire fear, in all thoſe who approached his perſon. Wearied, or diſguſted, at the fetters impoſed on his freedom by thoſe precautions, he ſoon deſiſted from them, and plunged anew into amuſements, or diſſipation. Yet, anxious to acquire, or to retain ſome place in the love of the lower orders of the nation, he affected an exterior of devotion, and even gave a ſanction, by his example, to the moſt abſurd practices of ſuperſtition.

Inſtitution of the confraternities of penitents.

The confraternities of penitents, which, in the beginning of his reign, he had ſeen at Avignon; and which the remonſtrances of the magiſtrates of Paris, and of the moſt reſpectable members of the parliament, had hitherto prevented from finding an entrance into the metropolis; were introduced, and eſtabliſhed. Theſe pious mummeries, ſubverſive of real piety, injurious to moral obſervances, and deſtructive of all obedience to the laws, became the perpetual occupation and entertainment of the inhabitants of the capital. The members, compoſing them, were, by the king's expreſs authority, formed into a regular body; and ſtatutes, publiſhed with ſolemnity, were framed for their regulation. Henry, in perſon, accompanied by the Papal nuntio, the princes of the blood, and the courtiers, aſſiſted at the proceſſions. The chancellor of France, the keeper of the ſeals, and the firſt magiſtrates, did not heſitate to mix in the cavalcade, covered with ſacks, their faces concealed, and in the moſt inclement weather. Many diſorders and irregularities, equally contrary to religion and to decency, found ſhelter under ſo convenient a diſguiſe; and the people, inſtead of being edified, or amended, by ſuch ſpectacles, grew more licentious, and manifeſted their contempt of civil order. Far from attaining the object, for which he had ſet on foot the confraternities, Henry became only more univerſally deſpiſed.

Proceſſions. March.

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ſpiſed. The contraſt of debauchery and exceſs, which he had exhibited in the company of his minions, only a few days preceding, and before the eyes of the ſame people, ſerved to expoſe him to the ſevereſt cenſure. Hypocriſy was added by his enemies to the liſt of all his other vices; and thoſe who attributed to devout ſentiments or impreſſions, his attendance on the proceſſions of the Flagellants, did not leſs ſeverely reprobate ſuch conduct, as unbecoming his dignity and ſituation. Even the clergy, who might, from obvious motives, have been diſpoſed to ſee his actions through a favorable medium, yet declaimed againſt his character; and the pulpits of Paris already reſounded with the language of inſolence and ſedition (23).

Contempt of the royal dignity and authority.

Numerous ſymptoms of an approaching and ſerious inſurrection began to appear; though ſuch was the indolence and infatuation of the king, that they made little impreſſion, and produced no change, in his ſyſtem. Publications, derogatory to the title of his family, as derived from Hugh Capet; and calculated to impreſs the people with an opinion of the great validity of the pretenſions of the houſe of Lorrain to the crown of France, as being deſcended from Charlemagne; were induſtriouſly circulated. The injudicious, and miſtaken clemency of Henry, who did not puniſh the authors of ſuch inflammatory, or treaſonable productions, with the ſeverity that they merited, encreaſed the evil. He even abaſed himſelf ſo far, as to authorize a refutation of the attack, made on his right to the crown of France; and by ſo undignified a mode of proceeding, he neceſſarily inſpired his enemies with greater audacity (24).

Symptoms of popular commotion.

(23) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 66—69. L'Etoile, Jour. d'Henry III. p. 157 and 158. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 262 and 263.

(24) L'Etoile, p. 162 and 163. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 70—72.

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Power and aſcendancy of the minions.

The effect of ſo many cauſes, combining to ſhake his power, was heightened by the unlimited aſcendancy obtained over him by his favorites. It ſeemed to partake of infanity, and was neither moderated by conſiderations of propriety, nor even of practicability. He was principally anxious to divide his bounty between Joyeuſe and Epernon, with ſo equal a hand, that no degree of jealouſy, or rivality, might interrupt their felicity, and diminiſh their mutual friendſhip. Joyeuſe having conceived the deſign of acquiring the important and extenſive government of Languedoc, poſſeſſed by Montmorenci; but, unable to procure his renunciation or diſmiſſion; ventured on a ſingular expedient, in order to attain his object. He went, in perſon, to the court of Rome, and endeavoured to induce Gregory the Thirteenth, to iſſue an excommunication againſt the marſhal, as a protector and abettor of the Hugonots. His requeſt was rejected by the pontiff, who penetrated the motives of Joyeuſe's viſit, and knew how to appreciate the conduct of Montmorenci, in forming connections with the Proteſtants. To compenſate for the mortification attending the refuſal, Henry, on his return, gave him the government of Normandy, which, from its magnitude and conſequence, had uſually been divided into four ſeparate departments, and entruſted to lieutenants. Epernon received thoſe of Boulogne, and of Mentz (25).

Journey of the duke of Joyeuſe to Rome.

Every meaſure, adopted by the king, in order to recover his popularity, or to impreſs the nation with a favorable opinion of his character and intentions, only ſerved to evince his want of judgment, and was completely ineffectual. Under the plauſible pretence of hearing and redreſſing the grievances of

Ineffectual attempts to raiſe ſupplies.

(25) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 264 and 265. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 74—80.

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the people; but, in fact, with a view to derive supplies from their generosity, he dispatched commissioners into many of the provinces, selected from the nobility and clergy. They exposed the wants of the crown; magnified, and extolled the affection of Henry for his subjects; but, concluded with demanding contributions: their mission was equally fruitless and injurious. An assembly, composed of delegates, which was designed to point out remedies to the various evils in the courts of justice, and the administration of the finances, was not attended with more beneficial consequences. Propositions for abolishing venality in judicial employments, and for the diminution of taxes, were offered; but no alteration was effected (26). CHAP. IV. 1583.

Second expedition to the Azores.

Anthony, the titular and unfortunate king of Portugal, continued earnestly to solicit another enterprize for the reduction of the Azores, and his subsequent re-establishment in the throne from which he had been expelled. Henry, in compliance with the exhortations of his mother Catherine, and of the duke of Joyeuse; rather than from any inclination to undertake so perilous an attempt, permitted a squadron to be equipped at Dieppe. It consisted of a few ships, on board of which were embarked six hundred troops. They reached the island of Tercera, where Emanuel de Sylva still remained in the interests of the exiled king; and being joined by the survivors of Strozzi's army, added to a number of Portugueze and natives, they prepared for their defence. Philip, anxious to crush a rebellion, from which his new conquest might receive a fatal blow, dispatched the marquis of Santa Croix, at the head of sixty galeasses, gallies, and vessels of various dimensions. Near twelve thousand Spanish, Italian,

Fleet of Spain sent to those islands.

(26) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 268—270. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 81 and 82.

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and German ſoldiers, accompanied him; furniſhed with every thing which could facilitate the entire
1583. accompliſhment of the expedition. The event correſponded to the preparations. Diſunion and jealouſy impeded the operations of the French and Portugueze. Sylva, having ſeparated from his allies, and even offered to betray them, in order to obtain his own pardon, no poſſibility remained of contending againſt ſo unequal a force. De Chatte, an officer of approved courage and fidelity, who
Auguſt. commanded the troops of France, finding his ſituation deſperate, capitulated on honorable terms; and Santa Croix, content with atchieving the great object of the war, did not violate the conditions.
Complete reduction of the rebels. Sylva, delivered up by his own adherents, ſuffered the puniſhment of rebellion; and Philip exerciſed the ſevereſt vengeance on the inhabitants of Tercera, who had ſo long defied his power, and endangered his tranquillity. No further attempt was made in any part of the Portugueze dominions, to ſhake off the yoke of Spain; and the unſucceſsful iſſue of the French armament, only tended to decry the adminiſtration, by which it had been fitted out and devoted to certain deſtruction (27).

1584. While Philip triumphed on the Atlantic, his arms
Proſperous condition of the Spaniſh affairs in Flanders. were advancing rapidly in Flanders. The conſpiracy of the duke of Anjou againſt the liberties of Antwerp, may be regarded as an æra, from which the affairs of the Netherlands conſtantly declined. Every endeavour to retard, or to avert its conſequences, was rendered ineffectual by the reſentment of the Flemings, and the promptitude of the prince of Parma. That celebrated commander improved
12th April. his advantages, with vigor and celerity. Having inveſted Ypres, and compelled the place to capitu-

(27) La Clede, vol. ii. p. 149—155. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 93—104.

late,

late, he ſoon afterwards became maſter of Bruges, which ſubmitted on favorable conditions. Ghent, ſhaken by inteſtine diviſions, already prepared to follow the example; and the navigation of the Scheld, which was greatly impeded, rendered the preſervation of Antwerp more than doubtful (28). CHAP. IV. 1584. 26th May.

In theſe diſtreſsful circumſtances, the States, yielding to the wiſe counſels of the prince of Orange, diſpatched deputies to wait on the duke of Anjou, with aſſurances of their diſpoſition to ratify a new treaty, and to ſubmit to his orders. But, that prince was no longer in a ſituation to liſten to the dictates of ambition. From the period of his quitting the Low Countries, a ſenſe of his miſconduct, and remorſe for its effects, had conſtantly purſued him. Oppreſſed with ſhame, and uncertain of his future operations, he avoided ſociety, and abandoned himſelf to dejection. After paſſing ſome months in retirement, he ſuddenly and unexpectedly appeared again at court, with a few attendants. A reconciliation was mediated between him and his brother, by Catherine of Medicis; and the duke returning to the caſtle of Chateau Thierry on the Marne, was ſoon afterwards attacked by ſymptoms of a very alarming nature. A violent effuſion of blood from all the paſſages of his body, cauſed by the effects of a cough, reduced him to ſo languid a ſtate, that he expired in a few weeks. The nature and circumſtances of his diſtemper, though probably natural, gave riſe to ſuſpicions of poiſon, in an age when that crime was familiar. His death was the ſignal of civil war, and liberated the partizans of "the League" from all further diſguiſe, or neceſſity of obſerving meaſures with the crown. Notwithſtanding the defects and weakneſſes of his character, he was not deſtitute of generous qualities; and during

Negotiations opened by the Flemings, with the duke of Anjou.

11th Feb.

1ſt May.

His death.

10th June.

His character.

(28) Strada, vol. iii. p. 465—476. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 173—181.

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1584. his laſt illneſs, he manifeſted a deep concern for the fate of thoſe, who having contributed to enable him to undertake the enterprize of Flanders, were, by his deceaſe, reduced to poverty and diſtreſs. He even, by his laſt will, addreſſed to the king, earneſtly, though vainly, beſought of Henry to diſcharge his pecuniary obligations, which were immenſe. Of all his acquiſitions in the Low Countries, only Cambray remained; and he bequeathed it to his brother, as a bulwark to Picardy and Champagne againſt the Spaniſh power. But, Henry, fearful of giving to Philip a pretext for war, if he openly took the city under his protection, permitted his mother to retain it, as if devolved to her by inheritance. From ſimilar motives, the council did not venture to qualify the deceaſed prince by the titles of duke of Brabant, and count of Flanders, at the ſolemnity of his funeral obſequies (29).

Aſſaſſination of the prince of Orange.

The duke of Anjou's death was ſpeedily followed by a blow, ſtill more alarming to the independance of the Flemings. The crime which Jaureguy had not been able to accompliſh, was perpetrated by another aſſaſſin; and Philip, at length, reaped the deteſtable fruits of his proſcription of the prince of Orange. That eminent and illuſtrious perſon, who had eſcaped the poniards of ſo many enemies, and the greater part of whoſe life had been paſſed in oppoſing the tyranny of Spain, fell by the hand of a

10th July. deſperate fanatic. He was ſhot with three balls, diſcharged from a piſtol, as he roſe from table, in the city of Delft, his moſt frequent reſidence. Balthazar Gerard, a ſubject of the king of Spain, and an emiſſary of the prince of Parma, was the murderer; and in the midſt of the torments inflicted on him, he gloried in his crime. The prince ſurvived

(29) L'Etoile, Jour. p. 173 and 177—179. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 274 and 275. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 181—184. Buſbeq. letters 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, and 39. D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 422 and 423.

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the wound only a few moments, and expired amid the tears and lamentations of his family, who were ſpectators of ſo tragical a ſcene.

1584.

The deſolation, occaſioned by his loſs, throughout the provinces of Holland and Zealand, was proportioned to the magnitude of the calamity. The people already anticipated their ſubjection to the Spaniſh yoke, and dreaded their own ſlavery, as inſeparably connected with the death of their protector. In prudence, fortitude, moderation, firmneſs, and all the talents requiſite to form the head of a vaſt and powerful combination, he exceeded any of his contemporaries. His military capacity was far inferior to that of the prince of Parma; but, the univerſality of his genius, and the depth of his reſources, enabled him to ſuſtain, and to ſurmount, all the efforts of the Spaniſh monarchy. Invincible under adverſe fortune, he roſe more formidable from his defeats; and to his unremitted exertions, the republic of Holland was indebted for its freedom, and its exiſtence. The gratitude of the people whom he had ſaved from tyranny, was on the point of conferring on him the ſovereignty of their country, when his death took place; and as the beſt proof of their veneration for his ſervices, they elected his ſon, Maurice, although ſcarcely paſt the limits of childhood, governor of Holland, Zealand, Friefland, and Utrecht; to which was added the dignity of high admiral. By an inſtance of felicity, rare in the hiſtory of mankind, he inherited almoſt all the great endowments of his father; excelled him in talents for war; and during the courſe of a life, diſtinguiſhed by brilliant atchievements, he confirmed and cemented the liberty, to which William, prince of Orange, had given birth (30).

Character of that prince.

Gratitude of the Dutch for his ſervices.

(30) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 184—189. Strada, vol. iii. p. 480—487. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 276.

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State of France, at the time of the duke of Anjou's death.—Ineffectual attempt of Henry, to induce the king of Navarre to renounce his religion.—Preparations of the duke of Guise, for taking up arms.—Support, given by Catherine of Medicis, to his ambitious projects.—Irresolution of Henry.—Treaty of Joinville.—Sovereignty of the Low Countries, offered to the king of France—Rejected by him.—First enterprizes of "the League."—Timidity of the king.—Treaty of Nemours.—War, declared against the Protestants.—Manifesto of the king of Navarre.—Junction of the Protestants with Montmorenci.—Accession of Pope Sixtus the Fifth.—He excommunicates the king of Navarre.—Reply of that prince.—Commencement and progress of hostilities.—Unsuccessful attempt of the prince of Condé, on Angers.—Affairs of the Low Countries.—Surrender of Antwerp.—Queen of England accepts the protection of the Dutch.

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1584. Condition of France, at this period.

BEFORE we enter upon that portion of the reign of Henry the Third, at which the wars of "the League" may be properly said to commence, it is indispensable to take a general view of the state of the court, and of the kingdom of France. Many causes had hitherto conduced to retard, and to delay the operations of the confederacy, begun at Peronne in 1576; and the undoubted, though concealed, object of which, was the destruction of the monarchy. Henry had, in some measure, disarmed it, at an early period of its existence, by adopting, and declaring himself its chief. The measure, however unbecoming the dignity of the throne, and the character

character of the common father and protector of every denomination of his subjects; yet, had enabled him to guide and controul a machine, too powerful to be destroyed by open force. The Hugonots, feeble, disunited, and excluded from dignities and employments, excited little apprehension: while, their leader, the king of Navarre, banished to a distant province; deprived of authority, even in his own government of Guienne; and destitute of any prospect of succeeding to the crown, was neither an object of alarm to his enemies, nor of attention to the nobility and people. Almost all the youth of France, and the most turbulent or discontented spirits, had found occupation beyond the limits of the kingdom, during the expeditions of the duke of Anjou to the Netherlands. Even, in the event of Henry's death without male issue, the Catholic religion could not be endangered, while his brother, whose adherence to the faith of his ancestors was unimpeached, and who was only in the flower of his age, survived, to ascend the throne. CHAP. V. 1584.

But, all these circumstances, so important to the preservation of general tranquillity, were completely overturned by the decease of the duke of Anjou. No barrier was any longer opposed to the eventual succession of the king of Navarre, which the nation regarded as certain, from the supposed inaptitude of Henry for the purposes of marriage. That prince, without waiting till his brother's eyes were closed, and during the state of extenuation which preceded his death, had already dispatched the duke of Epernon into Gascony. He was authorized to offer the king of Navarre the most advantageous conditions, if he would renounce his adherence to the Protestant religion, and repair to court without delay. A public declaration of his right to succeed to the crown, in case of Henry's failure of issue male, accompanied with every mark of

Consequences of the duke of Anjou's death.

May. Embassy of Epernon.

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of regard and distinction, were the inducements proposed, to obtain his acquiescence (1).

1584. Situation of the king of Navarre.

No situation could be more embarrassing than that of the king of Navarre. Whether he accepted or rejected the propofals made him, he beheld difficulties of no common magnitude. To abandon at once his religion, and those faithful followers who had never forsaken him under every reverse of fortune: to return to a capital and a palace, stained with the blood of his friends, and in which he had, himself, been so long detained a prisoner: to commit his life, his honor, and his interests, to the mercy of a prince, whose weakness, flexibility, and facility, he well knew; were alarming reflexions. On the other hand, the crown of France appeared to solicit his acceptance, and to justify, if not to demand, every sacrifice, even of conscience, for its attainment. His renunciation of the Hugonot faith and worship, could alone qualify him to wear it with safety; and would instantly remove the scruples of those zealous Catholics, who might otherwise dispute his title. Even the Guises and their partizans must be unable to oppose with effect his right of blood, when no longer weakened by the stain of heresy; and the public felicity, paramount to every other consideration, rendered his apostacy not only venial, but, in some measure, meritorious. If this important question had been only decided on grounds of policy and expediency, it is probable that the latter alternative would have been predominant. But, in an age, when theological controversy heated the minds of men, and when mutual injuries had rendered them tenacious of their opinions, arguments drawn from Scripture, were opposed to motives of state necessity. The king of Navarre, after long hesitation, and mature delibera-

He rejects the offers of Henry.

July.

(1) Busbeq. letters 37, 38, 39, and 40. L'Etoile, p. 176. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 198 and 199.

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tion, rejected the propoſition brought by Epernon: he qualified, at the ſame time, his refuſal, by proteſtations of his duty and allegiance to Henry; by aſſurances of his gratitude for the mark of royal favor extended to him; and by the offer of all the forces of his party, to ſuſtain the crown againſt their common enemies (2). CHAP. V. 1584.

Although the reſult of Epernon's embaſſy was immediately rendered public by the Proteſtants themſelves, yet it afforded a pretext to the adherents of "the League," to accuſe Henry of intentions, the moſt hoſtile to the preſervation and maintenance of the antient religion. They aſſerted, that, far from exhorting the king of Navarre to abjure his errors, Epernon had, on the contrary, been only diſpatched, in order to conclude a treaty with him, for the extermination of all the adherents of the Catholic faith. Under this fictitious pretence, they proceeded to adopt meaſures, little removed from an avowed inſurrection. Troops were ſilently collected in different provinces: chiefs were named and appointed, who, on a ſignal given, were to repair to their deſtination; and every movement of the confederates evinced a rebellion as imminent and inevitable (3). The feeble and puſillanimous conduct of the king, at a moment which demanded vigorous and deciſive counſels, gave courage to his enemies, while it expoſed the throne to inſult and contempt. Far from meeting a danger that he could no longer diſguiſe, or avoid, with firmneſs; he ſcarcely ventured to expreſs his ſenſe of its exiſtence, or reſentment at its approach. A proclamation, forbidding all confederations, or levies, on pain of treaſon, which he iſſued at this period, formed a

Conduct of the chiefs of the League.

Puſillanimity of the king.

December.

(2) Vie du Duc d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 85—95. Memoires de Villeroy, vol. ii. p. 77—175. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 198—200. Davila, p. 520—523.

(3) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 200 and 201. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 280.

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very insufficient barrier against a formidable faction, armed with the sanction of religion, supported by foreign powers, and conducted under leaders of equal intrepidity and talents.

Qualities, and character of the duke of Guise.

Henry, duke of Guise, the real chief of the League, and who exclusively directed all its motions, was supremely the object of popular idolatry. Concealing his personal ambition, under the mask of zeal: retaining in his own bosom the secret of his ultimate views and only divulging, even to his nearest relations, a portion of his intentions: rapid in his determinations, as well as in their execution; and conducted by the circumstances which he had originated, to the completion of his plans; he seemed to be formed for the scene in which he acted so distinguished a part. The superiority of his genius, more than the priority of birth, had given him an unbounded ascendant over his brothers, Louis and Charles. The first of these, already raised to the dignity of a cardinal, of an aspiring disposition, impetuous, and violent, continually urged and propelled the duke to the most daring and desperate counsels. On the contrary, Charles, duke of Mayenne, although distinguished by equal courage, yet more cautious, moderate, and phlegmatic, disapproved the rash projects of the head of his family; manifested a degree of reluctance to hazard their present greatness; and rather yielded to, than actively participated in, the resolution to commence a civil war (4).

Duke of Mayenne.

The cardinal of Bourbon joins the League.

Plausible as were the pretences on which the duke of Guise justified his opposition to the crown, they would not have been sufficient to enable him to escape the imputation of rebellion, or to seduce the affections and allegiance of the people, without other assistance. It was indispensable to cover

(4.) Davila, p. 502 and 503.

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and conceal his ultimate plans, under the ſhelter of a prince of the blood; and the cardinal of Bourbon was the only one fitted to his purpoſe. This weak and ſuperſtitious prelate, deluded by the proſpect of ſucceeding to the crown, in preference to his nephew, the king of Navarre; and ſurrounded by emiſſaries, who exaggerated the danger to which the Catholic religion would be expoſed, in the event of a Hugonot aſcending the throne; reſigned himſelf implicitly to their ſuggeſtions. Incapable of diſcerning the ſnare, and flattered by the homage paid to his rank, he prepared to act a principal part in the ruin and ſubverſion of France (5). CHAP. V. 1584.

Factions, and weakneſs of the court.

Nor did the Guiſes receive leſs ſupport at this critical juncture, from the internal diſſenſions, treachery, and intereſted views, by which the cabinet of Henry was ſwayed and actuated in all its deliberations. Catherine of Medicis, who had ſo long preſided in it, and whoſe influence or authority had been felt during near twenty years, was no longer in poſſeſſion of her former power. The minions of her ſon, who had engroſſed the royal favor, and alienated the king from his brother; ſucceeded in diminiſhing, if not annihilating, the queen-dowager's aſcendancy. She ſaw no probable means of reſuming it, except by rendering her interference neceſſary; and as her penetration enabled her clearly to perceive, that, in the ſituation of the Netherlands, Henry could only chuſe between a war with the king of Spain, or with his own ſubjects, ſhe deſired to involve him in the latter, where her mediation would be perpetually requiſite (6). Other motives concurred to induce Catherine to favor the family of Lorrain. Of her four ſons, three were already dead in the prime of youth; and no rational hope of legiti-

The queen-dowager.

Views and projects of Catherine.

(5) Davila, p. 510.—512. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 265 and 266.
(6) De Thou, vol. xi. 252.

mate

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1584.

mate iſſue to inherit the crown remained, though Henry was ſtill in the vigor of his age. Her deteſtation of the king of Navarre was inveterate and implacable; nor did ſhe heſitate to declare, that ſhe regarded his right of blood as chimerical, or, at leaſt, as queſtionable and problematical (7). His marriage with Margaret, her daughter, ſolemnized at the time of the maſſacre of Paris, had neither been fruitful, nor productive of any conciliation between the two branches of Valois and Bourbon.

Libertiniſm of the queen of Navarre.

The irregularities and libertiniſm of the queen of Navarre, unreſtrained by decency, were ſo notorious, as even to excite the indignation of Henry the Third himſelf, though little attentive in his own conduct, to the rigid obſervance of the laws of decorum, or morality. That prince, incenſed againſt his ſiſter for having, as he believed, authorized the aſſaſſination of one of his meſſengers, charged with diſpatches of a very ſecret nature, to the duke of Joyeuſe, at Rome; had ordered her to leave the court, and to return to her huſband. Not content with baniſhing her from his capital and preſence, he had cauſed her to be treated with every poſſible indignity, and had publickly upbraided her with her infamy and debauchery. Neglected and deſpiſed by the king of Navarre, ſhe ſoon afterwards quitted him, and took refuge among the mountains of the province of Auvergne (8).

Plan of Catherine, for altering the ſucceſſion of the crown.

Under theſe circumſtances, the queen-mother, regardleſs of the Salic law, which excluded females from the throne, turned her views towards the deſcendants of her daughter Claudia, married to the duke of Lorrain. She even attempted to induce the king, whoſe averſion to the Hugonots rendered

(7) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 277.
(8) Vie de Marguerite de Valois, p. 341—348.

him

him ſuſceptible of every impreſſion to their diſadvantage; to take meaſures for devolving the crown on the eldeſt ſon of his ſiſter, the ducheſs of Lorrain. The duke of Guiſe, however diſinclined to become ſubſervient to the greatneſs of another, notwithſtanding the connexions of blood which ſubſiſted between them; yet, flattered the queen-dowager with his aid, and acquieſcence in her project. In return, Catherine diſſembled all his treaſonable practices; deceived the king by plauſible excuſes for his daring conduct; extenuated his faults, and betrayed her ſon in the deareſt intereſts of his throne and kingdom (9). That unfortunate monarch found no reſources in his own character, againſt the perfidy of his miniſters; who, deſirous of conciliating the favor of Catherine, or corrupted by Spaniſh gold, were equally diſpoſed to conceal, and even to advance the projects of "the League." His natural and habitual irreſolution was encreaſed by the oppoſite opinions of his two favorites. Joyeuſe, who, by his marriage, had contracted an alliance with the family of Guiſe, exhorted his maſter to temporiſe, and even to unite with the princes of that houſe, for the extermination of the Proteſtants. But, Epernon, by birth a Gaſcon, long attached to the king of Navarre, and one of thoſe who accompanied him in his flight from the court, at the commencement of Henry's reign; urged him to have recourſe to the friendſhip and aſſiſtance of a prince, who, though a Hugonot, was his rightful heir, and only legitimate ſucceſſor in the throne of France. Uncertain of the courſe that he ſhould follow; incapable of a vigorous effort; and ever diſpoſed to conſult his preſent eaſe, at the expence of his future glory, or ſafety; Henry allowed the period for action to elapſe, in fruitleſs deliberations (10).

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Irreſolution of the king.

Oppoſite advice of his two favorites.

(9) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 252 and 253.
(10) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 253.

While

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1584. While the king, by a timidity so pernicious, exposed his crown to the most imminent hazard; the chiefs of "the League," conducted by very different counsels, and conscious that they had already advanced too far to retreat with safety, signed their treaty with Philip the Second. It was solemnly ratified and exchanged at the castle of Joinville, belonging to the duke of Guise. He himself, in person, together with the duke of Mayenne, and a procurator who represented the cardinal of Bourbon, appeared in the names of the Catholics of France. Taxis, duped by the king of Spain, and fully authorized to conclude the negociation, stipulated on the part of his sovereign. By the articles, Philip took under his protection, and entered into an alliance, offensive, and defensive, with the contracting princes, for the maintenance and preservation of the Catholic religion in France, and in the Low Countries. In case of the demise of Henry the Third, the cardinal of Bourbon was declared to be the rightful heir to the crown; and a perpetual exclusion of all heretics, was specified. The restitution of Cambray was inserted; together with the co-operation of the French, to effect the reduction of the Flemish insurgents. Philip, in return, engaged, from the day on which war should be commenced against the Protestants, to pay to the Catholic princes fifty thousand crowns, monthly; and by another article, he promised to supply the duke of Guise with whatever number of men, or sums of money, might be requisite to enable him to carry the treaty into complete execution. For reasons of expediency, it was agreed to keep the secret, till a favorable moment for its disclosure should present itself (11).

Treaty between the League, and the king of Spain.

31st Dec.

Articles of it.

(11) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 282 and 283. Davila, p. 513 and 514. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 272—275.

While

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While, in France, every circumſtance evinced the approach of civil war, the Flemings, divided among themſelves, and preſſed by the arms of the prince of Parma, were reduced to the greateſt extremities. The death of the duke of Anjou, at a juncture when an obliteration of all paſt injuries was on the point of taking place; followed by the aſſaſſination of the prince of Orange, plunged them into accumulated diſtreſs. Ghent had already ſubmitted on ſevere conditions, and was received into the obedience of its antient ſovereign. Mechlin, and Bruſſels, inveſted by detachments from the army of Spain, and beginning to experience the effects of famine, could not make a long or ſucceſsful reſiſtance. The prince of Parma reſerving to himſelf, as the moſt arduous and difficult atchievement, the ſiege of Antwerp; had commenced his operations, by completely intercepting all ſupplies, or reinforcements, which could arrive by means of the Scheld. In order to attain this object, without which all his efforts muſt be fruitleſs, he undertook to block the paſſage of the river below the city, notwithſtanding the breadth and the rapidity of the ſtream. The work, which, in magnitude and difficulty, might be compared with the moſt ſublime efforts of antiquity, was conſiderably advanced; and if perfected, the reduction of Antwerp became almoſt certain and inevitable. Urged by ſuch alarming conſiderations, which admitted of no delay, the ſtates of all thoſe provinces where the Spaniſh power had not as yet penetrated, after mature reflexion, embraced the expedient of imploring the protection of the king of France. An embaſſy, compoſed of perſons, ſelected for their wiſdom and eminence, was empowered to offer the ſovereignty of the Low Countries to Henry, on ſuch conditions as might be ſtipulated for their mutual advantage. They ſailed from the ports of Zealand; landed ſafely; and after remaining ſome time in the

Affairs of Flanders.

Siege of Antwerp.

Difficulty of the enterprize.

The Flemings implore the protection of Henry.

January.

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1585. 12th Feb.

vicinity of Paris, were admitted, notwithſtanding the remonſtrances and menaces of Mendoza, the Spaniſh embaſſador, to an audience. Henry received them graciouſly, in preſence of the queen-mother, and of his council of ſtate; expreſſed his ſenſe of the flattering propoſition made him by the Flemings; gave them hopes of his acquieſcence in their requeſt; and ſignified his wiſh, that they would deliver a written copy of their offer, in order that he, in concert with his miniſters, might deliberate fully on the ſubject (12).

Reaſons for his acceptance of the offer.

Never did a more weighty and important diſcuſſion preſent itſelf to a king of France, nor one which involved in it conſequences more deeply affecting his perſonal glory, and the general intereſts of his crown. The inhabitants of the richeſt and moſt commercial countries of Europe, ſought to be received into the number of his ſubjects. Thoſe provinces were contiguous to his own dominions; and a conſiderable portion of them had antiently been poſſeſſed by his predeceſſors. The tyranny of Philip the Second had driven them into a ſtate of revolt; and greatly as their affairs had declined ſince the arrival of the prince of Parma, they were far from deſperate. That commander, occupied before Antwerp, and engaged in an undertaking which demanded time and exertions, muſt be driven to a neceſſity of raiſing the ſiege under multiplied diſadvantages, if a French army entered Flanders, or Brabant. The king of Spain had diſſolved all the tyes which connected him with Henry; and had violated the peace of Cateau, concluded in 1559, between the two crowns, in a manner the moſt inſulting. By his command, or with his approbation, the marquis of Santa Croix had ignominiouſly, and

Provocations given him by Philip the Second.

(12) Strada, vol. iii. p. 491—495. Buſbeq. letters 40, and 41. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 252—255. Davila, p. 524 and 525. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 284.

in

in equal contradiction to the laws of nations and humanity, caused the unfortunate prisoners taken at the Azores to be massacred. Not content with so barbarous a revenge, Philip had conspired against Henry's domestic repose; inflamed his subjects to rebel; aided them with money; and concluded recently a solemn treaty with their chiefs, the avowed object of which was to involve the kingdom in an immediate civil war. CHAP. V. 1585.

Debility of the crown, and monarchy of Spain.

These powerful inducements to awaken a generous resentment, were aided and sustained by motives of policy, and almost of necessity. Only the choice between a civil, or a foreign war, was, indeed, left to the king; and it seemed impossible to balance on the preference of the two alternatives. Nor was the power of the Spanish monarchy such, as to deter, or intimidate him from attacking it by open force. Philip, declining in years, and having only one sickly heir, still in infancy, to inherit his vast dominions, was, besides, involved in numerous embarrassments. Portugal was hardly subjected; and the Spanish treasury, unequal to the perpetual demands made on it by the prince of Parma, could not suffice to equip new fleets, and to pay the numerous armies which would be necessary to combat the French. Even, if the resources of the Catholic king were still greater than his adherents described them, it was more judicious to meet him in the field, than to permit the emissaries of Spain to kindle sedition, and to excite rebellion, by the secret distribution of arms and money (13). There were not wanting about the person of Henry, some incorrupt and honest ministers, who attempted to impress upon him a conviction of these facts, and to induce him to embrace a manly and a magnanimous part. That prince, who possessed penetration,

Henry rejects the proposition of the Flemings.

(13) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 298—312.

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and who had a perfect knowledge of the interests of his crown, inclined to accept the offers of the Flemings. But, his aversion to engage in an enterprize of such magnitude, together with the opposition which it received from his mother, and the members of the cabinet, prevailed on him to reject the proposition. At the audience which he gave to the embassadors of the States, he endeavoured to temper the refusal by every conciliating expression; lamented, that the situation of his own affairs, and the troubles occasioned by the adherents of "the League," did not permit him to undertake their defence; assured them, that when he had pacified the commotions of France, he would extend his attention to the concerns of the Netherlands; and promised to recommend their cause to the protection of the queen of England (14).

March 30.

The League takes up arms.

The duke of Guise had not waited for the ultimate decision of Henry upon the proposals of the Flemings, to take up arms. No sooner had the intelligence reached the prince of Parma, that the embassadors, deputed by the States, had been admitted to an audience of the king of France, than he dispatched repeated couriers to Mendoza, the Spanish embassador at Paris. Convinced, that on the final event of the siege of Antwerp, depended the reduction of all the Netherlands to the obedience of Philip; he besought of that minister, to urge the partizans of "the League" to the immediate accomplishment of their late engagements with the crown of Spain. Guise himself, sensible that if a foreign war took place, he should not be able to retain under his standard the nobility and officers who were attached to him; did not hesitate to strike the blow. A second edict, published by Henry, in which he prohibited all assemblies of troops with-

Edict published by Henry. March 29.

(14) Busbeq. letters 44, 45, and 46. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 312—315.

out

out his expreſs command; and by which he diminiſhed conſiderably the ordinary taxes; made no alteration, nor occaſioned any delay, in his reſolution. Already, at the firſt ſignal given, the forces retained by him, began to collect in Lorrain; while the duke of Mayenne put himſelf at the head of a formidable body, in Champagne and Burgundy. Baſſompierre, who had raiſed a number of German cavalry; and Fiſer, who had received a ſimilar commiſſion to levy infantry in the cantons of Switzerland, were ordered to advance with all poſſible celerity. The firſt attack was made on the city of Verdun, which, after a ſhort defence, ſurrendered to the duke of Guiſe in perſon. Toul followed the example; but, Metz, of which Epernon was governor, and in which he had placed a numerous garriſon, remained firm in its adherence to the crown, and rejected all the offers of the rebels (15).

1585.

21ſt April. Firſt exploits of the League.

Previous to the commencement of hoſtilities, the cardinal of Bourbon, acting in concert with the other chiefs of "the League," retired from court to his dioceſe of Rouen; from whence, being invited by a deputation of the nobility of Picardy, he repaired to Peronne, in that province. On his arrival, he publiſhed a manifeſto, calculated to impreſs the nation with ſentiments equally favorable to the cauſe which he had embraced, and injurious to the character of the king. Every popular topic of declamation and complaint was enumerated, and placed in its moſt conſpicuous point of view. The indirect encouragement and ſupport of hereſy: the danger of the entire abolition of the antient faith and worſhip: the venality of offices; the abuſes committed by favourites; and the intolerable pecuniary oppreſſions exerciſed on the people. To redreſs theſe grievances, it was ſtated, that he, as

Manifeſto of the cardinal of Bourbon.

March. 31.

(15) Davila, p. 535 and 536. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 275—283.

firſt

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first prince of the blood, together with a number of other persons, of every order and condition, had taken up arms; which they were determined never to lay down, till they had obtained complete satisfaction and redress (16). Meanwhile, in every part of the kingdom, but, peculiarly, in the northern and eastern provinces, where the adherents of the house of Guise were numerous, they proceeded to throw off all subjection to the government. Lyons was secured to them by Mandelot, who having seized and demolished the citadel, declared in their favour. Bourges, Orleans, and Angers, three of the most important, and well fortified cities of France, were induced to revolt by their respective governors, who joined "the League." Mezieres, a frontier garrison of Champagne, was captured by the duke of Guise; while the duke of Mayenne rendered himself master of Dijon. Chalons, a place situate on the river Marne, and at no considerable distance from Paris, was fixed on for the magazine of arms; and the cardinal of Bourbon, whose presence and name were so useful in concealing, or in justifying their enterprize, was conducted thither from Peronne, with demonstrations of extraordinary attention and respect. (17).

Insurrections of the provinces.

Notwithstanding so many proofs of disaffection and even of revolt, a prince of magnanimity might have found in the throne itself, and in the attachment of a considerable part of the nation, resources more than adequate to suppress the rebellion, commenced by the adherents of "the League." The specious pretences, under which the leaders attempted to palliate their insurrection, could only delude the multitude; and made no impression on the wise, or the

Resources of the crown.

(16) Davila, p. 528—535. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 284—287. Memoires du Duc de Nevers, folio, Paris 1665, vol. i. p. 641—646.

(17) Davila, p. 538. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 28. Busbeq. letters 48, 49, and 50.

moderate

moderate portion of their countrymen. In ſeveral places, their attempts had been completely fruſtrated, and their partizans or accomplices puniſhed as traitors. Marſeilles, after having been near three days in the hands of the inſurgents, was recovered by the royaliſts, and ſecured in the obedience of the crown. At Bourdeaux, marſhal Matignon rendered ineffectual every effort to ſhake the fidelity, or to gain the poſſeſſion of that important and commercial city. The proclamation of the king, declaring it treaſonable to take up arms; weak as ſuch a meaſure muſt be eſteemed, had yet induced many perſons, who had been incautiouſly induced to join the party, inſtantly to return home. Others were ſtill wavering and uncertain; the duke of Nevers, one of their greateſt ſupports, abandoned them from diſguſt, or from ſcruples of honor and conſcience. Even the cardinal of Bourbon himſelf, during a ſhort abſence of Guiſe, had been powerfully ſhaken, and almoſt induced to return to a ſenſe of his duty. It demanded all the eloquence and ſophiſtry of the duke, to obliterate the impreſſion. Gregory the Thirteenth, notwithſtanding the importunity and ſolicitation of the Spaniſh cardinals, had pertinacioufly refuſed to give any ſanction to an enterprize, which, however decorated with the epithets of a holy union for preſerving the Catholic religion, ſavoured of open rebellion. The ſubſidies of Spain were ſubject to many delays and contingencies: the Swiſs and German troops had not yet arrived; and in ſeveral provinces, the forces of "the League" had been diſperſed, or cut in pieces (18).

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Failure of the plans of the League.

Obſtacles to its ſucceſs.

But, ſuch was the inaptitude of Henry for any meaſures of energy; ſo inſurmountable was his indolence, puſillanimity, and relaxation of mind, that

Weakneſs of Henry's conduct.

(18) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 285—290. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 288—298, and 316—329.

alt

CHAP. V. 1585.

all these circumstances did not rouse him to resistance. Neither indignation for the insulted majesty of the throne; nor a wise consideration of the calamities, which firmness and fortitude could alone avert, were of sufficient force to burst the habitual tameness of his character. It was in vain that the king of Navarre, by his agents, besought of him not to allow the menaces of the duke of Guise, to induce him to violate the peace subsisting with the Hugonots, and thereby plunge himself anew into civil war. Yielding to the suggestions of his mother, and to the interested, or perfidious advice of the same ministers, who had recently procured the rejection of the offers of the Flemings; he authorized Catherine of Medicis to open a negotiation with the heads of the confederates. It was begun at Epernay, near Chalons; and after some delays, was ultimately concluded at Nemours. The terms on which the duke of Guise agreed to lay down his arms, were not less destructive, than they were ignominious, to the sovereign, by whom they were accepted. Henry not only consented to commence hostilities on the Protestants, and to revoke every concession hitherto made for their protection; but, he submitted to the personal degradation of pardoning those by whom he had been insulted and injured, on account of the pretended zeal exhibited by them in defence of the Catholic religion. He even engaged to employ the troops of "the League," actually drawn out against his authority, for the extirpation of heresy; and to charge the chiefs, with the execution of the sentence pronounced against the princes of the blood, the presumptive heirs to the crown of France. In addition to these public articles, he was compelled to subscribe to private conditions, which cemented the power of the Guises, and levelled all the remaining barriers opposed to their encroachments. Twelve cities, situated in different provinces of the kingdom, were

He negotiates with the League.

7th July.

Ignominious articles of the treaty.

Secret conditions.

were granted them as places of ſurety: a company of guards, on horſeback, were allowed to the cardinal of Bourbon; to the dukes of Guiſe and Mayenne; to their brother, the cardinal, and to their uncles, the dukes of Aumale and Elbeuf. All the money belonging to the royal revenue, which they had intercepted and applied to their own purpoſes, was remitted; and the ſum of two hundred thouſand crowns, due to the German forces, raiſed by the duke of Guiſe, was agreed to be defrayed by the king (19). 1585.

Magnanimous behaviour of the king of Navarre.

While Henry thus purchaſed a precarious and diſgraceful ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities, at the expence of every prerogative of the crown, and by the ſacrifice of his own dignity and independance; the king of Navarre diſplayed a very different character. Conſcious that he muſt become the firſt victim to "the League," and that his perſonal ruin would open the way to the deſtruction of the monarchy itſelf; he did not heſitate to anticipate, and to expoſe, the treaſonable projects of his enemies. In a long, and ſpirited manifeſto, addreſſed to the nation, he exculpated himſelf from every injurious charge or imputation, which the malice of his opponents had invented; profeſſed his readineſs to ſubmit even his religious opinions, to the deciſion of a council, legitimately aſſembled: retorted the charge of rebellion and treaſon on thoſe who had, without provocation, taken up arms againſt their prince: reprobated their ambition, rapacity, and contempt of the laws; and concluded by beſeeching the king, that he would permit him to terminate a conteſt, in which ſo much blood muſt be ſhed, by a ſingle combat between himſelf and the duke of Guiſe, in whatever

10th June. His manifeſto.

(19) Davila, p. 557 and 558. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 292. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 328—331. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 686—689.

place,

CHAP. V.

place, either within, or beyond the limits of the kingdom, he might think proper to appoint (20).

1585.

His letter to Henry.

Finding, however, that all his efforts to prevent an accommodation between Henry and the adherents of "the League," were fruitleſs; and that the Proteſtants were on the point of being attacked at the

10th July.

ſame time, by their united forces; he addreſſed a letter to the king, in which was depictured all the heroiſm and magnanimity of an undaunted mind, ſtruggling againſt oppreſſion. He reminded Henry of his own orders recently iſſued, enjoining him, as head of the Proteſtants, to remain quiet; aſſuring him of protection; and proteſting, that no menaces or artifices of their common adverſaries, ſhould ever induce him to infringe the toleration extended to the Hugonots, by the laſt treaty of peace. He remonſtrated with Henry on the cruelty and impolicy of driving his unoffending ſubjects, to the neceſſity of defending themſelves: he appealed to his own innocence, as the beſt juſtification; and profeſſed his reliance on a juſt and ſuperintending Providence, the avenger of crimes, and the ſhield of thoſe who are oppreſſed. In concluſion, he declared his determination to periſh with arms in his hands; and to oppoſe to his laſt breath, the unjuſt enterprizes of his own enemies, and of the crown and kingdom of France (21).

Union of Montmorenci, with the king of Navarre.

Theſe ſpirited and generous ſentiments were followed by meaſures equally deciſive and efficacious. Although the oſtenſible preparations and menaces of "the League," armed with the ſanction of the royal authority, appeared to be excluſively and ſolely levelled againſt the profeſſors of hereſy; yet, the duke of Montmorenci, well aware that his own ruin was inſeparably connected with that of the

(20) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 320—325. Davila, p 358—362.
(21) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 326—328.

king

king of Navarre, did not hesitate to enter into the strictest union with him and the prince of Condé, for their mutual preservation. Having met near Lavaur, in the province of Languedoc, they framed, and rendered public a declaration, calculated to undeceive the nation on the motives of the war, ready to be commenced. They charged the family of Guise, with having been the authors of all the misfortunes, which, from the reign of Francis the Second, to the present time, had desolated and depopulated the finest country in Europe: that, after calumniating the princes of the blood, and endeavouring to render them odious to the people, they had not scrupled to take up arms against the king himself, and by the impressions of terror, to compel an equitable monarch, to wage war with his subjects. They protested, in their private and public capacities, against such acts of violence and treason; declared their readiness to take under their safeguard all Catholics who had not signed "the League;" and finished, by repeating their determination, with the means which God and Nature had put into their hands, to oppose such unprovoked, and unjustifiable violence (22).

CHAP. V. 1585.

10th Aug. Their joint declaration.

Tenor of it.

During the progress of these interesting events, Henry, irresolute, unable to recede, and irritated against the faction which was about to render him the reluctant instrument of their ambitious views, beheld before him the immediate prospect of a civil war. His discontent manifested itself, notwithstanding the presence of the cardinal of Guise, in the language and indirect reproaches, with which he loaded the Parisians; who, after engaging him in a rupture with the Protestants, from their antipathy to heresy, expressed no inclination to submit to the pecuniary burthens, necessary for carrying on hostilities. De-

Conduct, and discontent of the king.

(22) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 332—334.

sirous

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firous to try all expedients, in order to avert ſo great a calamity, of which he was the involuntary cauſe, and of which he foreſaw that he muſt ultimately become the victim; he reſolved to attempt anew, to ſhake the conſtancy of the king of Navarre, and with that hope, he again diſpatched an embaſſy to the court of Nerac. Every offer was held out, which could prevail upon him, if not to renounce his religion, and embrace the Catholic faith; yet, to ſuſpend, for a limited time, the exerciſe of the Hugonot worſhip in Bearn; and to ſurrender the places of ſecurity, put into the hands of the Proteſtants, at the laſt treaty of peace. In caſe of the refuſal of the king of Navarre to conſent to ſo great conceſſions, the embaſſadors were ordered to inſiſt, that he ſhould iſſue directions to ſtop the march of the German auxiliaries, who were ready to enter the kingdom. But, that prince did not think proper to comply with any of the requiſitions; and he beſought the king not to expect, that whatever deſire he might have to evince his allegiance, he could carry his obedience ſo far, as tamely to preſent his neck to his implacable enemies. He adjured his majeſty, not to abandon his own honor, by uniting with traitors; and he expreſſed his readineſs to meet the queen-mother, for the purpoſe of adjuſting the terms of a final accommodation, provided that Henry would previouſly withdraw his forces from all the provinces ſouth of the Loire (23).

25th Aug. Embaſſy to the king of Navarre.

Propoſitions rejected.

Death of Gregory the Thirteenth.

No alternative except war remained; and "the League," already poſſeſſed of all the authority of the crown, had received a further acceſſion of ſtrength, by the demiſe of Gregory the Thirteenth. That aged pontiff, who could never be induced to give his unqualified approbation to their ſchemes,

(23) Davila, p. 573 and 574. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 337—340. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 293.

expired

expired after a reign of thirteen years; and was succeeded by Felix Perretti, better known in hiſtory under the title of Sixtus the Fifth. He commenced his ſhort, but memorable pontificate, by the ſevereſt puniſhment of the outrages and crimes, common in every part of the territories of the church; and from which the city of Rome itſelf was not ſecure, or exempt. The timid and moderate character of his predeceſſor had encouraged them, by the impunity with which they were attended; but, the inexorable ſeverity of Sixtus, ſpeedily reſtored order and ſubmiſſion to the laws. The arrogance and violence of his diſpoſition, led him eaſily to comply with the entreaties, made to him by the emiſſaries of the houſe of Guiſe; and at their inſtigation, he ſoon after his acceſſion to the chair of St. Peter, iſſued a bull, by which he declared the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé excommunicated, and incapable of ſucceeding to the crown of France. This political malediction was accompanied with epithets the moſt opprobrious, applied to the two princes themſelves, who were ſtigmatized as apoſtates, heretics, and enemies of God and man. Their vaſſals, or ſubjects, were releaſed from all obedience; and Henry was exhorted, in his capacity of the moſt Chriſtian king, to extirpate the race of Bourbon, and to carry the Papal ſentence into immediate execution (24).

1585. 10th April. Election of Sixtus the Fifth.

21ſt Sept. Bull, publiſhed by him, againſt the king of Navarre.

So indecent and inſulting a diſplay of the plenitude of the apoſtolic power, excited various and oppoſite emotions, on its promulgation in France. The partizans of "the League," elated at the favorable interference of the ſovereign pontiff, expreſſed their ſatisfaction and triumph, by every poſſible means. Paris was inflamed, and the paſſions

Effects produced by it.

(24) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 368—371.

of

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of the populace were irritated by ſeditious preachers; who, aſcending the pulpits, harangued the multitude, and pointed their deteſtation not only againſt the Proteſtants, but, againſt Epernon, and other perſons ſuſpected of attachment to the princes of the blood. On the other hand, Henry, however ſervile and tame in his acquieſcence with the requiſitions of the duke of Guiſe, could not avoid feeling and reſenting an outrage, which, though apparently pointed againſt hereſy, did not leſs attack the majeſty of the throne, and the independance of his crown. He well knew, that, under the minority of Charles the Ninth, twenty-three years preceding, when Pius the Fourth, who then occupied the Papal chair, had ventured to excommunicate Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre; the miniſters of his brother had not ſubmitted in ſilence to the indignity. The conſtable Montmorenci, and the chancellor l'Hoſpital, who then preſided in the cabinet of France, had compelled the ſee of Rome to revoke, and even to ſuppreſs the bull, as injurious to a princeſs ſo nearly allied to the royal blood. But, Henry, already engaged in a war for the purpoſe of exterminating the Hugonots, and apprehenſive of giving any cauſe of offence to the adherents of "the League," contented himſelf with a more indirect mode of diſapprobation, by only prohibiting its publication (25).

Conduct of Henry.

He indirectly oppoſes it.

Generous anſwer of the king of Navarre to the bull.

The king of Navarre, reſtrained by no conſiderations of that nature, and following only the impulſe of his indignation, took more efficacious meaſures for reſenting the inſult. Unawed by any terror of the pontifical power, he cauſed a reply to

5th Nov.

to the bull of excommunication to be publiſhed, and affixed in the moſt public places of Rome itſelf. Neither the perſon, nor the dignity of Six-

(25) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 374—376.

tus,

tus, were respected in the composition. With the generous warmth of a high-spirited and injured prince, he gave to the successor of St. Peter the epithets of a calumniator, and a lyar; appealed from his sentence to that of a general council; and declared mortal and irreconcilable war against him, as the enemy of God, and as Antichrist. He reminded Sixtus, that his own ancestors of the family of Bourbon, had formerly repressed the arrogance and audacity of the bishops of Rome; and added, that, as he was no way inferior to his most illustrious predecessors, he trusted, by the divine aid, to exact a signal and exemplary vengeance for the late outrage. He concluded by appealing to all the allies of France, and to all the crowned heads or princes of Europe, against the tyranny of the see of Rome, and against the enterprizes of "the League," as the common foes of God, the king, and the state (26).

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An answer so magnanimous, made by a prince under circumstances the most adverse, excited universal admiration. All the moderate and dispassionate part of the nation, respected the courage and elevation of mind which could dictate it; and the Catholics themselves, far from approving the excommunication, saw with regret and concern, that its effects would be more beneficial, than injurious, to the party against whom it was directed. Even Sixtus himself, who knew how to appreciate the great qualities of an enemy, conceived from this specimen, the highest opinion of the king of Navarre. He did not conceal his sentiments; expressed his esteem for a constancy and firmness, which no external accidents could depress; and uniformly refused to open the treasury of the church, or to contribute, in any manner, towards the war declared against the Hugonots.

Approbation, which it excited.

(26) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 376—378. Davila. p. 574—576.

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1585. The hoſtilities, which "the League," under the name and ſhelter of the crown, had been ſo long preparing, at length commenced. They were preceded by a new edict on the part of the paſſive and reluctant king, whom the Guiſes had compelled, againſt his inclination, to attack the king of Navarre. It reduced to the term of fifteen days, the remainder of the ſix months allowed to the adherents of the reformed religion, for quitting the kingdom; and enjoined the confiſcation and public ſale of all their effects, at the end of that period. The duke of Guiſe having ſignified to Henry his deſire of commanding the forces, which were to be ſtationed on the eaſtern frontier, in order to oppoſe the entrance of the Germans into the kingdom; his brother, the duke of Mayenne, was appointed to conduct the army, deſtined to march againſt the king of Navarre, in Guienne. But, Henry, though he did not venture by open force to repreſs the enterprizes of that powerful family, took effectual precautions to impede their military operations. Matignon, a man devoted to the crown, was ordered to co-operate with Mayenne; but, in reality, his inſtructions were of an oppoſite nature; and the delays or obſtacles which he continually framed, added to the advanced ſeaſon of the year, prevented any enterprize of moment, on the part of the Catholics (27).

New edict of Henry. 16th Oct.

Conduct of that monarch.

Meanwhile, the Hugonots, neither depreſſed by the late edict, nor diſmayed by the vaſt diſparity of force, prepared with vigor for their defence. The king of Navarre, after publiſhing a counter edict, juſtifying his reſiſtance on the principle of neceſſity, and commanding the ſeizure of the effects of the inhabitants, in all the cities which had enforced the royal orders; aſſembled his troops, on the banks of

Preparations of the Hugonots, for their defence.

30th Nov.

(27) Davila, p. 572 and 573. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 379.

the

the Garonne. In Dauphiné, Leſdiguieres obtained many advantages over the Catholics, and reduced to his obedience the greater part of the province. Another of their chiefs, the viſcount of Turenne, penetrated into the Limouſin; while the prince of Condé drove the duke of Mercœur out of Poitou, with conſiderable loſs. Emboldened by his ſucceſs, the prince, puſhing his advantages, laid ſiege to Brouage; and he was on the point of compelling the garriſon to capitulate, when he received the intelligence, that the caſtle of Angers had been ſurprized by a ſmall number of his adherents. Elated at ſo unexpected and proſperous an event, which opened a proſpect of transferring the theatre of war from Poitou, to the rich provinces beyond the Loire, and even of approaching Paris; he inſtantly determined to quit the proſecution of his preſent enterprize, and to advance, without delay, to the aſſiſtance of his friends. Many of his officers remonſtrated with him on the danger, if not the temerity, of ſuch an attempt: they repreſented the ſeaſon, already far advanced; the difficulty of paſſing ſo broad a river as the Loire, ſwelled by autumnal rains; and the uncertainty of the caſtle holding out till his arrival. But, the prince, whoſe intrepidity qualified him for the moſt arduous exploits, and whom obſtacles only irritated, remained firm to his purpoſe. He immediately began his march, at the head of a choſen body of his friends and ſoldiers; effected his paſſage acroſs the Loire; and after ſurmounting many impediments, appeared before Angers.

1585.

Operations of the war.

Enterprize of Angers.

8th Oct.

The prince of Condé paſſes the Loire.

By a ſurprizing, and almoſt unparalleled ſeries of accidents, in which fortune had a greater ſhare than wiſdom, or courage; the three officers who gained poſſeſſion of the caſtle, had already periſhed. The ſoldiers, only ſixteen in number, who remained; deſtitute of any chief, and of oppoſite religious per-

21ſt Oct.

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He attacks Angers.

His retreat and flight.

He escapes to England.

Reduction of Flanders and Brabant.

Bruſſels ſurrenders, March 13.

ſuaſions, agreed to ſurrender; and on the day preceding the arrival of Condé, they had put the caſtle into the hands of the duke of Joyeuſe. Notwithſtanding ſo ſevere a diſappointment, which the prince did not receive, till he was in ſight of Angers, he perſiſted to attack the city. But, his troops, diſcouraged, and oppoſed by ſuperior numbers, gave way; and it became expedient to retreat. The attempt was arduous, and almoſt impracticable; as the Catholics, apprized of the expedition, had aſſembled to intercept his flight, or his paſſage over the Loire. Beſet by enemies, he reluctantly conſented to adopt the only means of extrication left; that of dividing his troops into ſmall parties, who might evade the vigilance of their numerous opponents. The expedient was embraced, and attended with uncommon ſucceſs; almoſt all the ſoldiers having rejoined their ſtandards, without loſs. The prince of Condé himſelf, whoſe capture was regarded as ſo certain, that the Pariſians already anticipated the ſpectacle of a prince of the blood brought priſoner to the capital; followed only by a few friends, took the route of Normandy; and paſſing over into the iſland of Guernſey, purſued his voyage from thence to the court of England (28).

While France was thus involved in all the calamities inſeparable from civil war, the prince of Parma had nearly atchieved the total reduction of Flanders and Brabant to the obedience of Spain. That great commander, profiting of the diſſentions of the Flemings, and of the death of the prince of Orange, puſhed his operations with augmented vigor. Bruſſels, reduced to the laſt extremities of famine, capitulated, and obtained honorable conditions.

(28) D'Aubig. Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 440—452. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 385—398. Davila, p. 582—587. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 294—296.

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The Catholics, who formed the moſt numerous part of the inhabitants of Nimeguen, having expelled or overpowered the Proteſtants, opened their gates to the Spaniards. By this important acquiſition, Guelderland, and even the provinces of Holland and Utrecht, were, in ſome degree, laid open to the incurſions of the enemy. Mechlin, inveſted on all ſides, and hopeleſs of relief, ſurrendered at diſcretion. Antwerp alone continued, after near a year, to reſiſt the utmoſt efforts of the beſiegers. Aſſiſted by engineers of the moſt conſummate ſkill, and ſuſtained by their deteſtation of the tyranny of Philip; they not only rejected every offer of accommodation; but, repeatedly attacked the works, by which the prince of Parma had intercepted the ſupplies of proviſions. Exhauſted at length by fruitleſs endeavours to deſtroy the bridge conſtructed acroſs the Scheldt: repulſed in their ſallies; and beginning to experience the preſſure of famine; they opened a negociation with the Spaniſh general. It was ſoon terminated; and that celebrated city, which had long been the emporium of the north; but, which had experienced, during the laſt twenty years, every variety of deſolation, pillage, and misfortune, ſubmitted reluctantly to its former maſter. Philip, whoſe bigotry and violence had baniſhed order, tranquillity, and commerce from the Netherlands; after exhauſting the immenſe reſources of the monarchy of Spain in the attempt to reduce the Flemings, beheld himſelf again in poſſeſſion of the ten ſouthern provinces. But, the trade of Antwerp had fled with its civil and religious liberties; while Amſterdam, hitherto concealed by its own obſcurity, began to emerge; and all the ſources of wealth were irrecoverably transferred from the Scheldt to the Texel (29).

April. and Mechlin. 21ſt June.

Surrender of Antwerp. 17th Aug.

(29) Strada, vol. iv. p. 1—149. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 417—442.

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1585. Dutch implore the aid of the queen of England.

In this extremity, the Dutch, already united by the cloſeſt political tyes, and maſters of the ſeven northern provinces of the Low Countries; far from yielding to deſpair, evinced an unſhaken fortitude. Deprived of the aſſiſtance and co-operation of the Flemings; rejected in their application to the king of France; and on the point of being attacked by the victorious troops of Spain, conducted by the greateſt general of the age; they determined to implore the aid of Elizabeth, queen of England. While Antwerp, reduced to extremity, though not

6th July. ſurrendered, continued to reſiſt an embaſſy, compoſed of the moſt illuſtrious perſons from all the provinces yet unſubdued, arrived in London, and offered the ſovereignty to her, on terms ſimilar to thoſe which had been propoſed to Henry the Third. Following the dictates of the cautious and ſagacious policy, which, during her long reign, had always tempered and reſtrained the natural magnanimity of her character; ſhe declined the propoſition in its full extent; but, aſſured the States of her im-

10th Aug. Treaty between Elizabeth and the Dutch. mediate and efficacious protection. By a treaty concluded with them, ſhe ſtipulated to ſend over five thouſand infantry, and one thouſand cavalry into Holland, under an experienced commander, to whom extenſive civil and military authority ſhould be confided. Theſe troops, which the queen engaged to maintain at her own expence during the continuance of the war, were to be defrayed, after its concluſion, by the Dutch; and as pledges for their repayment of the money neceſſary to be diſburſed, the towns of the Brille, and Fluſhing, together with the caſtle of Rammekins, were conſigned to Elizabeth. Unterrified by the menaces and alarming preparations of Philip to invade her

December. Engliſh troops ſent to Zealand. in her own dominions, ſhe ſpeedily accompliſhed the conditions. The Engliſh ſuccours landed in Zealand; and though her partiality for an unworthy favorite,

favorite, induced her to commit ſo important an expedition, and ſo vaſt a charge, to the earl of Leiceſter, who abuſed his power, and tarniſhed the luſtre of his ſovereign's arms; yet the timely aſſiſtance extended to the Dutch, rendered ineffectual all the exertions of Spain, and finally eſtabliſhed the exiſtence and independance of the ſeven united provinces (30).

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(30) Hume, Hiſt. of Eng. vol. v. p. 269—273. Strada, vol. iv. p. 176—185. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 447—452.

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CHAP. VI.

Letters addreſſed by the king of Navarre, to the different orders of the kingdom.—Campaign in Guienne, and Poitou.—Conduct of Henry.—His journey to Lyons.—Audience, and anſwer, given by him, to the German embaſſy.—Operations of the duke of Guiſe.—Conference of St. Brix.—State of Paris.—Machinations of "the League."—Henry diſconcerts them.—Succeſs of Joyeuſe.—Entrance of the Germans and Switzers into Lorrain.—Inactivity of the king.—Duke of Guiſe defends France.—Battle of Coutras.—Progreſs of the foreign army.—Defeat of Vimory.—Second defeat, at Auneau.—Flight of the Germans and Switzers.—Treaty concluded with them, by Henry.—Exploits and perſonal glory of the duke of Guiſe.—Return of the king to Paris.—Foreign affairs.

CHAP. VI.

DURING theſe important tranſactions in the Netherlands, where the interpoſition of Elizabeth rendered new efforts, on the part of Philip the Second, indiſpenſable; the king of Navarre, apprehenſive of being cruſhed by the confederacy of the crown with the forces of "the League," prepared to ſuſtain ſo ſevere a ſhock. Previous to the commencement of any military operations, he again addreſſed letters from Montauban, in Languedoc, to the different orders of the kingdom. In that to the clergy, he reprobated the ambition of the Guiſes, who, under the veil of religion, had not ſcrupled to involve France in civil war; had compelled the king to violate his own treaties with the Hugonots; and had ſacrificed all the liberties of the Gallican church, in order to obtain the protection of the ſee of Rome. His addreſs to the nobility, by the affectionate

1586. King of Navarre addreſſes letters to the different orders, 1ſt January;

fectionate and endearing manner, in which he implored their exertions to avert the calamities impending over their country; and by the reluctance which he expreſſed to ſhed the blood of a claſs of ſubjects, ſelected for the ornament and defence of the throne; was calculated to make a deep impreſſion. In his letter to the third eſtate, he pointed out and lamented the heavy burthens about to be impoſed on them, to gratify the malevolence and injuſtice of a powerful faction, who had made their ſovereign the inſtrument of their own vengeance; and who proſecuted their private animoſities, in the name, and at the expence of the nation. To the city of Paris, he recalled the recollection of their antient loyalty and adherence to their kings: he gave the juſt eulogiums to the reluctance which they had manifeſted, to contribute towards the ſupport of hoſtilities ſo unprovoked; and he profeſſed his readineſs to ſubmit all his opinions to the arbitration of a council, ſanctioned and confirmed by the ſtates general (1). CHAP. VI. 1586. and to the city of Paris.

Military meaſures embraced by the king of Navarre.

Conſcious, while he made his appeal to the nation, that neither eloquence nor arguments would decide the conteſt; he, at the ſame time, had recourſe to arms. Too feeble in pecuniary reſources, in numbers, and in all the requiſites for a campaign, to venture to meet his opponent in the field; he embraced a ſyſtem highly favourable to the protraction of the war. Having garriſoned his caſtles, ſituated along the banks of the Dordogne, and the Garonne, which formed a barrier difficult to force; he himſelf, accompanied only by a choſen body of cavalry, and unencumbered either with baggage or artillery, appeared wherever his preſence was neceſſary. The celerity and uncertainty of his movements: the perfect knowledge which he poſſeſſed of

(1) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 567—571. Chronol. Novenn. vol. i. p. 21—44.

the

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the country; and the decision of his natural character, prompt to conceive, or to baffle all the exertions of the enemy to force him to an action: These qualities were contrasted with the habitual caution and slowness which distinguished the duke of Mayenne, in every operation. That general laboured under numerous, and almost insurmountable impediments. His army, destitute of artillery, was distressed by the want of pay, and checked by the inclemency of the season. Matignon, jealous of his interference in a province, of which he himself was governor; and secretly prompted by the king to prosecute the war with languor; interposed perpetual obstacles and delays. After wasting nearly three months before they entered Guienne, during which time the troops were considerably diminished by distempers, an open misintelligence broke out between the commanders. When their operations at length commenced, they were limited to the siege and capture of some unimportant towns; and Mayenne, irritated with the difficulties opposed to his progress, only waited for the conclusion of the campaign, to demand his dismission from so inglorious and unprofitable a service (2).

Impediments to the progress of the royal army.

In every part of Poitou and Saintonge, where the principal strength of the Hugonots was concentered, the exertions were equally feeble and indecisive. The prince of Condé, returning from England, where Elizabeth had supplied him with money, and given him a squadron for his escort; repaired his late disaster before Angers, by redoubled vigilance and activity. Formed for the hardships and dangers of the field, his heart had, notwithstanding, been sensible to the attractions of Catherine Charlotte de la Tremouille; and motives of policy combining with his

Feeble operations.

Marriage of the prince of Condé.

16th March.

(2) Davila, p. 589.—592. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 560—566, and 578—582, and 586—592. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 24—32.

inclinations,

inclinations, he ſoon after eſpouſed her, at the city of Taillebourg. She was in the bloom of youth, ſprung from an illuſtrious family, and ſiſter to the duke de la Tremouille, who, having embraced the reformed religion, brought a vaſt acceſſion of force to his new ally. Notwithſtanding theſe circumſtances, which ſeemed to promiſe ſo much felicity, no nuptials were ever more inauſpicious, nor terminated by a more tragical cataſtrophé. Biron, meanwhile, at the head of a conſiderable body of ſoldiers, approached Rochelle, and laid ſiege to Marans, a town in its vicinity: but, hoſtilities in that quarter were ſhortly afterwards ſuſpended by an armiſtice, agreed on between him and the king of Navarre. It was deſigned to facilitate a conference, which Catherine of Medicis, at Henry's entreaty, undertook to manage, with the view of concluding a final accommodation. Alarmed at the firſt intelligence of ſuch a deſign, the duke of Guiſe, who was ſtationed at the other extremity of the kingdom, on the frontiers of Champagne, in order to oppoſe the entrance of the Germans; began to remonſtrate, in terms approaching to menace. His efforts to prevent a treaty, which, he foreſaw, muſt be fatal to all his ambitious projects, were powerfully ſupported by the Papal nuntio; and the diſcontent of the Pariſians, which already threatened an inſurrection in the capital, rendered a peace with the king of Navarre, a meaſure no leſs unpopular, than dangerous (3).

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Armiſtice. Auguſt.

Oppoſition of the duke of Guiſe, to a pacification.

Amidſt ſo many calamities, by which France was deſolated; and with the proſpect of ſtill greater evils before him, Henry preſerved all the indolence and ſupineneſs of his character. Concealed in the receſſes of the Louvre, and beſieged by rapacious mi-

Indolence of Henry.

(3) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 573—577, and 583—586. Davila, p. 592—594, and p. 600. D'Aub. vol. iii. p. 19—22. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 300—304.

nions;

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nions; he emerged at intervals from his repoſe, only to render himſelf ſupremely odious, or contemptible. His recreations were as deſtitute of dignity, as they were proofs of an enervated and effeminate diſpoſition. He was not aſhamed to expoſe himſelf to the view of his people, ſurrounded with dogs, monkeys, and perroquets, at a time when the kingdom groaned under accumulated, and almoſt inſupportable misfortunes. The expences incurred for objects ſo worthleſs and puerile, exceeded belief, and augmented the public indignation. It exhauſted the treaſury, to ſupport them, and to maintain the armies acting againſt the Hugonots, notwithſtanding the contributions levied from the clergy, and the alienation of a conſiderable portion of the royal domain. In this embarraſſment, ſeventeen new edicts, impoſing taxes, were ſent to the parliament of Paris, by the royal order. But, the members, with a generous ſpirit of reſentment at the abuſe of the prerogative of the crown, refuſed to regiſter impoſitions ſo oppreſſive. Henry was neceſſitated to appear in perſon, in order to ſurmount their oppoſition; and his preſence was productive of ſubmiſſion. The murmurs, excited by ſuch arbitrary and injudicious meaſures, were not leſs univerſal; and experience evinced to him, how dangerous it is, to exhauſt the patience and loyalty of a great people.

His profuſion, and oppreſſions.

16th June.

Monaſtic and ſuperſtitious practices of the king.

Paſſing rapidly from the extreme of luxury and diſſipation, to the renunciations of a ſevere and monaſtic life; the king, not content with mingling in proceſſions, and undertaking pilgrimages to various altars or ſhrines, renowned for their ſanctity; abandoned frequently all the duties and functions annexed to his high ſtation, in order to immure himſelf with Hieronimites, or Feuillans. Theſe orders of Monks, introduced by himſelf, and the former of which he had cauſed to be brought from Spain, were placed in

in the wood of the caſtle of Vincennes, in the immediate vicinity of Paris, where cells were conſtructed for their accommodation; or in the ſuburbs, cloſe to the palace of the Louvre and the Tuilleries. After paſſing ſome days in the ſuppoſed exerciſe of mortification and abſtinence among them, he ſuddenly re-appeared, in the habit of a penitent, followed by a number of Flagellants. He even carried his devotion, or hypocriſy, to ſo great a length, as to wear about his waiſt, a large chaplet, the grains of which were cut into the ſhape of ſkulls. Mixing a capricious taſte for the elegant arts, with the practices of ſuperſtition; he amuſed himſelf with collecting, at whatever price, the moſt coſtly paintings upon vellum, executed by the greateſt artiſts of Italy; and with theſe he ornamented the walls of his chapels. So many ſymptoms of a depraved, or alienated underſtanding, made a deep impreſſion on the minds of the inhabitants of the metropolis; who, inflamed by ſeditious preachers, and no longer reſtrained by any reſpect for the perſon, or character of their ſovereign, began to liſten to the moſt daring propoſals of inſurrection and rebellion (4).

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His amuſements and recreations.

The Proteſtant princes of Germany having determined to ſend an embaſſy to Paris, in order to ſupplicate the king to terminate the war commenced againſt the Hugonots; he quitted the capital, and repaired to Lyons. Various motives induced him to undertake a journey of ſuch diſtance, at ſo critical a juncture. By delaying to give audience to the German embaſſadors, he hoped to retain their ſovereigns in uncertainty as to his intentions reſpecting peace; and he naturally concluded, that they would ſuſpend their ultimate reſolution of ſending an army to the

He goes to Lyons. 23d July.

Motives for his journey.

(4) L'Etoile, p. 206. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 310 and 315. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 594, and 599.

aſſiſtance

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assistance of the Protestants, till they should be convinced that it was indispensable. He was anxious to know the result of the intended conference between his mother and the king of Navarre, which might entail consequences of the last importance to his own repose, and to the general felicity of the kingdom. An inducement more powerful than any of a political nature; the desire to superintend, in some measure, the motions of his two favorites, Joyeuse and Epernon; impelled him to fix his residence at Lyons. Not satisfied with the acquisition of offices, dignities, and emoluments of every kind, the ambition of these minions aspired to the separate command of two armies; and the facility of Henry, which equalled his profusion, immediately accorded their request, though they possessed scarcely any other qualities requisite for the employment, except personal courage. Their views were likewise widely different, in soliciting the charge. Joyeuse, who had passed the zenith of his favor, and who leaned towards the interests of "the League;" entering the Gevaudan, directed all the force of his exertions against the Hugonots. As they had no regular troops to oppose him, he penetrated into that mountainous country, made himself master of several towns, and exercised the utmost violence against the unfortunate prisoners who fell into his hands. But, Epernon, whose influence continually augmented, and exceeded any limits; who had evinced his partiality to the interests of the king of Navarre; and who was not less odious to, than he, in turn, detested the Guises; was animated by very opposite inclinations. He had recently received from the bounty of the king, his master, the government of Provence, become vacant by the death of Henry, count of Angouleme, natural son to Henry the Second. Such was, however, the authority acquired by the partizans of the duke of Guise in that province,

Armies entrusted to Joyeuse and Epernon.

Conduct of Joyeuse.

Opposite inclinations of Epernon.

province, that it was doubtful whether the new governor could eſtabliſh his power among a people diſaffected to his perſon, and who had thrown off all reſpect for the orders of the crown. The entrance of Epernon was not a little facilitated by a ſignal victory which Leſdiguieres, at the head of the Proteſtants, obtained over the troops of the zealous Catholics, conducted by the baron de Vins, a ſteady adherent of "the League." Aided by ſo opportune an event, Epernon, with a well-appointed army, and a numerous artillery, found little reſiſtance; and availing himſelf of the laſſitude, or inferiority of the two parties, he ſurmounted all oppoſition (5).

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Wearied with the complaints of the German embaſſadors, who having arrived at Paris, waited with impatience for the king's return, in order to obtain an audience; Henry reluctantly repaired to the metropolis. The delegates, addreſſing him in the names of the three Proteſtant electors, of Saxony, Brandenburg, and the Palatine, as well as of many inferior ſtates of the empire; cauſed their letters to be publickly read. Thoſe princes repreſented, with a plain and hardy frankneſs, not only the calamities which he inflicted upon France, by perſecuting his ſubjects; but, the diſhonor and infamy annexed to an unprovoked violation of his own edicts of toleration. In the names of their reſpective ſovereigns, they beſought him to ſuſpend the further progreſs of the war; and they offered him all the ſupport which he might think proper to demand, or accept, if he would turn his efforts againſt ſuch as had dared to excite commotions in his dominions, and to conſpire againſt his dignity and repoſe. Henry was much more ſenſible to the ſeverity of the former part of

Henry returns to Paris.

12th Oct. Remonſtrances of the German princes.

(5) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 304 and 305, and 308 and 309. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 599—605, and 615—619. Davila, p. 602—604.

the

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the remonſtrance, in which his faith and honor were attacked; than he was touched by the entreaties, or affected by the offers of the German princes. In his reply, he adopted a tone, not only of reſentment, but, of indignation; and regardleſs of the conſequences, he diſmiſſed the embaſſadors with expreſſions of contempt and inſult (6).

Reply of Henry.

Meaſures of the duke of Guiſe.

Far from being mollified or diſarmed by theſe demonſtrations of his averſion to the Hugonots, the duke of Guiſe ſeemed to proceed with augmented boldneſs and celerity, towards the final execution of his deſigns. While, on one hand, he cauſed all the actions of Henry to be miſrepreſented by his emiſſaries, and attributed his recent treatment of the Germans, to profound diſſimulation; on the other, he employed the troops under his command in enterprizes unauthorized by the king, contrary to his orders, and injurious to his intereſts. As the territories of the duke of Bouillon, who profeſſed the reformed religion, might greatly facilitate the entrance of foreign forces into Champagne; it was determined to invade them, although no provocation had been given, nor act of hoſtility committed on his part. Donzy, and afterwards Rocroi, were attacked, and taken by the duke of Guiſe: who, continuing his incurſions, made himſelf maſter of Raucour, and menaced Sedan itſelf, the capital of the principality. He was diverted from the further proſecution of the enterprize, by the refuſal of the city of Auxonne in Burgundy, to receive a garriſon in the name of the duke of Mayenne. The place was inſtantly inveſted, and captured; while the duke of Aumale, another prince of his family, governor of Picardy, ſeized upon Dourlens, and the principal

He attacks the duke of Bouillon.

(6) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 606—610— Davila, p. 604—606.

towns

towns along the banks of the Somme. All the eaſtern provinces, including a vaſt proportion of France, extending nearly from the gates of Calais, uninterruptedly, to thoſe of Lyons, were already in the dependance of "the League." The chiefs of the union, emboldened by Henry's timidity, and irritated at the obſtacles which he had contrived to oppoſe to the military progreſs of Mayenne, met at the abby of Orcamp, near Noyon, in Picardy; where they proceeded to embrace reſolutions ſubverſive of all obedience to the crown. They agreed to continue the war undertaken againſt the duke of Bouillon; to render themſelves maſters of the whole duchy; and regardleſs of the king's approbation, whom they accuſed of indirectly ſuſtaining the Hugonots, to puſh their operations with redoubled vigor, in every poſſible direction (7).

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Power of the League.

30th Sept.

Reſolutions of the chiefs.

While the duke of Guiſe was thus employed; the king, averſe to a war which interrupted his habitual indolence; terrified at the proſpect of a foreign army of Germans, which impended over his dominions; and incenſed at the daring projects of a faction, no longer reſtrained by any remains of allegiance or duty; turned his whole attention towards the reſult of the conference between his mother and the king of Navarre. Catherine of Medicis, ſinking in years, and oppreſſed by infirmities, did not decline an occaſion of exerting her influence, and rendering her ſervices neceſſary. If ever, in any of her negociations with the Hugonots, ſhe can be regarded as having acted with ſincerity, it was on this occaſion. She ſaw the ruin into which her ſon was plunged, and to which ſhe had, herſelf, been acceſſary, by the indirect ſupport given to the projects of the Guiſes. An expedient preſented itſelff or unit-

Views and meaſures of Henry.

(7) Davila, p. 613—614. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 610—612. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 304 and 307.

ing

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ing the two kings, while it perpetuated the crown in her own descendants, and effectually crushed the pernicious attempts of the enemies of the state. Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre, was not only destitute of issue; but, her abandoned conduct and dissolute life had rendered her unworthy to ascend the throne, or even to share her husband's bed. Sheltered among the mountains of Auvergne, she was already forgotten; and it could not be difficult to obtain from the see of Rome a dissolution of the marriage. Christina, the princess of Lorrain, granddaughter of Catherine, and niece of Henry, might supply Margaret's place; and the beauty of her person was encreased by the modesty of her deportment. To give its full effect to the proposition, Christina accompanied the queen-mother to St. Brix, a small town on the Charente, near Cognac, in Angoumois; where, after many difficulties and precautions, the king of Navarre repaired. The interview commenced by mutual reproaches, calculated to conceal the real object of the conference; but, in the more private communications, Catherine, by authority of her son, offered him the young princess, together with a declaration of his right to the throne, in case of the death of Henry without male issue. She enforced it by every argument drawn from his own situation, and that of the kingdom itself, which so loudly called for an effectual remedy to its multiplied and encreasing misfortunes. His resumption of the Catholic religion, and his return to court, were the sacrifices demanded of the king of Navarre. Flattering as were the offers, he, notwithstanding, rejected them, after a delay of only two days. The same reasons, which had influenced his determination, when Epernon was dispatched to him by Henry, not only subsisted in their full force, but were even strengthened by the interval of time. He was well acquainted with the king's aversion to the Hugonots:

Interview of St. Brix.

18th Oct.

Offers of Catherine, to the king of Navarre.

Motives for their rejection.

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Hugonots: he diſtruſted Catherine; and he was not ignorant, that negotiations with the Guiſes were carrying on, at the moment when the animoſity of the royaliſts and the adherents of "the League" ſeemed to render all reconciliation between them impoſſible. Above every other conſideration, he dreaded, with reaſon, to commit himſelf a ſecond time, to the mercy of a faithleſs prince, and of a tumultuous capital, deſtitute of obedience, inflamed by ſeditious demagogues, and the populace of which held his perſon and religion in equal execration. The queen-mother vainly attempted to ſurmount impediments of ſuch magnitude, by urging the impoſſibility of Henry's entering into new and indiſſoluble connections with a heretic. All her arguments were ineffectual; and the king of Navarre, after reiterating his profeſſions of loyalty to the crown, and of gratitude to his ſovereign, whom he offered to join, with his own and the German auxiliaries, in order to exterminate their common enemies; withdrew from the conference. It was continued for ſome time longer, in the name of the two kings, by the intervention of the duke of Nevers, and the viſcount Turenne; but, far from diminiſhing the difficulties oppoſed to an accommodation, they only rendered them more apparent and inſurmountable (8).

Ineffectual concluſion of the conference.

The

(8) Davila, p. 616—620. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 619—622. D'Aub. vol. iii. p. 22—24. Chronol. Novennaire, vol. i. p. 31 and 32.

Davila alone, of all the contemporary hiſtorians, ſeems to have been fully informed of the ſecret object of the conference of St. Brix, and of the offer of the princeſs Chriſtina of Lorrain, as the future wife of the king of Navarre. His relation of every circumſtance attending the interview, is too minute, and his authorities are known to have been too high, to call in queſtion his veracity. De Thou, who, in all reſpects, muſt be regarded as the moſt judicious and able writer of his age, does not appear to have been acquainted with the concealed nature of Catherine's propoſals, nor even to have known that Chriſtina herſelf was conducted to St. Brix. He omits her name, at leaſt, in his enumeration of the perſons of diſtinction, who accompanied the queen-mother, though he mentions Catherine of Bourbon, abbeſs

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State of the metropolis.

The indefatigable exertions of the partizans of "the League" had, in no part of the kingdom been attended with such complete success, as among the inhabitants of the metropolis; where the personal weaknesses and vices of the sovereign being more intimately known, had withdrawn the obscurity, which veiled the throne from the rest of Henry's subjects, placed at a distance from the seat of government. His ill-timed clemency and lenity; if the inactivity and apathy of that prince, can be justly so entitled; towards all those who distinguished themselves by acts of daring outrage against him,

of Soissons, aunt to the king of Navarre. In D'Aubigné, are contained many curious, and interesting particulars concerning the interview; but, neither in his recital, nor in the "Chronologie Novennaire," is the offer of Christina specified. Those authors were probably ignorant of the fact. Sully passes over the conference of St. Brix; and there is no mention whatever of it, in the "Journal d'Henry III." Even, by the testimony of Davila, whose partiality towards his benefactress, Catherine of Medicis, renders him on that point, more deserving of credit; the king of Navarre was justified in not accepting the proposals made to him, however apparently brilliant. It appears, that, at the very moment when Henry commissioned his mother to urge their immediate acceptance, he was treating with the heads of "the League;" and that he had assured the papal Nuntio, the duke of Guise, and the Parisians, of his determination to conclude no treaty with the Hugonots, which would not be ultimately for the benefit of the Catholic religion. If we reflect on the similar protestations made by Charles the Ninth, to the Legate, before the massacre of Paris; and if we consider how little reliance could be placed on the oaths of so fickle a prince as Henry the Third, or so treacherous and fickle a woman as the queen mother, secretly attached to the party of the Guises; we shall see ample reason for approving the determination of the king of Navarre; independant of every motive drawn from those sentiments of honor, decorum, and conscience, which must have opposed a renunciation of his religion.

D'Aubigné relates, that the duke of Nevers said to the king of Navarre, in the course of the conversations; "Sire, you would act better to make "your court to our common sovereign and master, than to the mayor of "Rochelle, from whom, in your greatest necessity, you cannot extort the "smallest assistance." "We do not (answered that prince) understand "the science of imposing contributions: for, we have no Italians among "us: but, at Rochelle, I do every thing that I wish, by only desiring to "do what I ought." Under Henry the Third, almost all the financiers, contractors, and persons who farmed the revenues, were natives of Italy.

It is somewhat singular, that De Thou fixes the conference, on the 13th of December; D'Aubigné, in the beginning of March; and Davila, on the 18th of October. As there were many interviews, and much time consumed in them, we must account for so extraordinary a contradiction of these three historians, from that circumstance.

seemed

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seemed to secure impunity, and to provoke resistance. Every art, calculated to inflame a bigotted, sanguinary, and furious multitude, was practised in order to render the king odious, as well as suspected. Their credulity, proportioned to their ignorance, made them susceptible of any impression, and led them to swallow the most improbable fictions. Notwithstanding the incontestible proofs which, throughout his whole reign, the king had given of attachment to the antient religion, and of an equal aversion to the reformed doctrines; the Parisians considered him as privately leagued with the king of Navarre, for the extirpation of the Catholic faith. His retirements to Vincennes, for the ostensible purposes of maceration and devotion, were stigmatized, as only concealing the most enormous and profligate debaucheries. Even the clergy, with the exception of certain monastic orders whom he peculiarly favored and enriched; became the instruments to withdraw from him the allegiance of the people. In the confessionals, every treasonable and seditious principle was silently inculcated, and deeply impressed; while from the pulpit, the more eloquent and audacious preachers declaimed against their sovereign, and openly exposed his enormities, or arraigned his administration. Already, in almost all the various professions, trades, and obscure walks of inferior life, throughout the capital, persons selected for their activity and zeal, met, under cover of the night, to communicate their operations, and to compare their respective proceedings.

Credulity of the Parisians.

Disaffection of the clergy.

Paris being divided into sixteen wards, or districts, a council, composed of as many men, chosen from each, was formed, in order to direct and superintend the movements of the subordinate actors. Many individuals, alarmed at the pretended danger of a subversion of the national religion, though not otherwise disaffected to the crown, were admitted to

Plans for an insurrection.

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the nocturnal aſſemblies, and gradually initiated in their myſteries. Among the moſt diſtinguiſhed leaders of the cabal, was Buſſy le Clerc; who, after having been a fencing-maſter, had obtained a place of ſolicitor in the parliament of Paris. La Chappelle Marteau, a man of deſperate fortune, purſued by his creditors, occupied likewiſe a high place in the ſeditious meetings. They all received their inſtructions from Mainville, the agent and miniſter of the duke of Guiſe; a young man of ſuperior extraction, poſſeſſing eloquence, capacity, and an unbounded devotion to the cauſe in which he had engaged. Theſe qualities were, however, contraſted with equal arrogance, inſolence, and temerity (9).

Arts of the League to inflame the Pariſians.

Many artifices were uſed, and numerous expedients deviſed, in order to ſuſtain the flame of ſedition among the multitude. The confeſſors denied abſolution to ſuch as refuſed to enter into the aſſociation: proceſſions, not only of the inhabitants of Paris, but from Picardy, Lorrain, and other provinces; compoſed of perſons of both ſexes, dreſſed in white, and having croſſes on their habits, continually kept alive the general ferment; while they were favorable to the deſigns of the chief conſpirators. Emiſſaries of approved zeal and capacity, were ſent into the country, to ſpread the tenets, and augment the proſelytes of "the League." They artfully addreſſed themſelves to thoſe whoſe embarraſſed circumſtances, or profligate character, rendered their ſeduction eaſy; and they exaggerated the forces, military and pecuniary, poſſeſſed by the duke of Guiſe, who was the object of their ſupreme idolatry.

So numerous and ardent a body of men, was diſpoſed to engage in ſchemes the moſt deſperate; nor

(9) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 649—652. Davila, p. 606. Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 12—15.

could

could they be reſtrained, without difficulty, from anticipating the cautious projects of the leaders, and proceeding to immediate extremities. As a prelude to greater and more deciſive enterprizes, an attempt was formed againſt the city of Boulogne, of which Epernon was governor. Mendoza, the Spaniſh embaſſador, urged the execution of the plan, with a view of ſecuring a port in the Britiſh channel, which, from its advantageous ſituation, might afford a ſafe and convenient place of refreſhment or retreat, to the Spaniſh Armada, deſtined againſt England. In order to obtain the conſent of the duke of Guiſe and the principal Pariſians, he promiſed them, that Philip, when they were poſſeſſed of Boulogne, would openly join his forces, and act in concert with "the League." All the preparations for conducting the attack, were made with ſuch ſecreſy and ability, that its ſucceſs ſeemed to have been certain, if it had not been revealed by one of the perſons engaged in the deſign. Poulain, a ſubordinate officer of the police; although in indigent circumſtances, yet moved by ſcruples of honor or loyalty, divulged it to Chiverny the chancellor. Precautions ſo effectual were taken in conſequence, that the ſcheme was not only rendered abortive; but Vetus, the conductor of it, was made priſoner; and the duke of Aumale, governor of Picardy, who had advanced to ſupport the aſſailants, eſcaped with difficulty from an ambuſcade, placed to intercept his retreat. Notwithſtanding the audacity of an enterprize ſo treaſonable, Henry had the weakneſs, at the ſolicitation of the duke of Guiſe, to liberate Vetus, after a detention of a few months, and to bury in oblivion the whole proceeding (10).

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Enterprize againſt Boulogne.

It is divulged and prevented.

(10) Davila, p. 607 and 608. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 653—658.

Encouraged

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Encouraged by the king's puſillanimity, and almoſt ſecure of impunity, the leaders proceeded to acts of a more atrocious nature. Although the abſence of Guiſe, and his exhortations not to precipitate affairs, in ſome degree, reſtrained their ardor; yet, on the arrival of his brother, Mayenne, from his campaign againſt the king of Navarre, the Pariſians laid before him a project, of no leſs magnitude, than enormity. It had for its object, the ſeizure of the king, whom they propoſed to confine in a monaſtery: the impriſonment, or maſſacre of his miniſters and favourites: the capture of the Baſtile, the Temple, the Arſenal, and the Louvre; and the formation of a government, compoſed of their own adherents. As the pillage of the metropolis might become an unavoidable conſequence of the execution of the plan; and as their troops might diſband, in order to plunder; meaſures of prevention were taken, by preparing barricades, compoſed of earth, and chains which could be ſtretched acroſs the principal ſtreets. Eight thouſand armed men were aſſerted to be in readineſs, for effecting the enterprize. Mayenne, naturally cautious, and little diſpoſed to engage in ſchemes which muſt be committed to a tumultuous and ungovernable populace, was ſhocked at the atrocity, as well as overcome by the immenſity of the propoſition. He, notwithſtanding, after ſome heſitation and repugnance, conſented to avow and join the conſpirators, if ſucceſsful.

Project for ſeizing, and impriſoning Henry.

Henry, warned of the deſign, by the ſame faithful ſpy, who had already fruſtrated the machinations of the Pariſians; loſt no time in taking effectual ſteps for his own preſervation. The chiefs, ignorant of the quarter from whence they were betrayed, but, deterred by the king's precautions, poſtponed their meaſures: while Mayenne, terrified, and expecting hourly to be arreſted, or executed as a traitor,

The king receives information of it.

tor, was reduced to the neceſſity of feigning indiſpoſition. Encouraged, at length, by the ſilence of the government; he ventured to withdraw from Paris, after previouſly repairing to the Louvre, to take leave of his ſovereign. Inſtead of ſeizing, and bringing him to puniſhment, Henry diſmiſſed him with a ſarcaſtic reprimand, calculated to incenſe, but, not to deter, him from repeating ſuch criminal attempts; and the leaders, whom he left behind in the capital, neither diſheartened, nor dejected, ventured to renew them, though with ſimilar ſucceſs. The remonſtrances and menaces of the duke of Guiſe, alarmed leſt ſuch premature efforts ſhould prevent the final accompliſhment, which time and occaſion could alone mature, with difficulty impoſed a reſtraint on their impetuous paſſions, and withheld them from open inſurrection (11).

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Alarm of the duke of Mayenne, at its diſcovery.

While theſe appearances of popular diſcontent manifeſted themſelves in the metropolis; the proſpect was not leſs gloomy in every other quarter. The king, whoſe inſurmountable indolence had allowed the factions of his court to attain a degree of ſtrength which he could no longer controul; ſaw his dominions on the point of being ravaged by foreign, as well as by domeſtic enemies. On one hand, the German auxiliaries prepared to march to the aſſiſtance of the Hugonots, and might be ſhortly expected to enter France. On the other, he beheld the duke of Guiſe, at the head of a numerous and formidable party, ready to diſpute their paſſage, and to defend the monarchy, of which he himſelf, as ſovereign, was the natural guardian. His triumph, or his defeat, muſt even be alike fatal; ſince, in the former caſe, he would be left a prey to "the League;" and in the latter, he would be at the mercy of the Proteſtants. Unable to controul

Critical condition of the king.

(11) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 659—664. Davila, p. 608—614.

the

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His indecision, and misconduct.

the events which were to decide on the cleareſt intereſts of his crown: impelled alternately by oppoſite and conflicting motives: betrayed, or abandoned by the favorites, whom his improvident prodigality had raiſed to the ſummit of greatneſs; and deſtitute of the vigor, or deciſion, requiſite to extricate him from the labyrinth in which he was bewildered, he ſuffered himſelf to be borne along by the current; and ſeemed to expect from time and accident, the means of ſurmounting or eſcaping from the accumulated dangers, which ſurrounded him on every ſide.

Joyeuſe marches into Poitou.

The duke of Joyeuſe, leſs ſenſible to the benefits received from Henry, than actuated by jealouſy at Epernon's pre-eminence in favor; and ambitious to fill the place which the duke of Guiſe had long poſſeſſed, as head of "the League;" was deſirous to approve himſelf deſerving of ſo high a ſituation. Having obtained the command of the army deſtined to act againſt the Hugonots in the weſtern provinces, he advanced into Poitou; ſurprized ſome troops of the king of Navarre, who were occupied in pillage; and, contrary to the terms of the capitulation granted them, as well as to the laws of humanity, he cauſed them indiſcriminately to be put to the ſword. Elated by his ſucceſs, which was followed with other advantages; and uneaſy at the decline of his intereſt with the king, he returned to court; where he was a ſpectator of the new and munificent marks of affection, ſhowered upon his rival, who had recently ſolemnized his nuptials with the rich heireſs of the houſe of Candale. Mortified at Epernon's triumph, and the rapid decreaſe of his own favour: irritated by ſome expreſſions, reflecting on his perſonal courage, that Henry let fall: and humbled by receiving intelligence, that the king of Navarre had, during his abſence, driven the royal forces into Touraine, and purſued them

Auguſt. He returns to court.

to

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to the banks of the Loire; Joyeuſe perceived, that only ſome great and eminent exploit could maintain him in his preſent elevation. Under that conviction, he demanded, and obtained permiſſion from the king, to force the Proteſtants to a deciſive engagement. The young nobility, apprized that a general action was about to take place; eager to acquire glory; and captivated by the liberality and affability of the commander; flocked to his banner, with demonſtrations of the greateſt ardor: while Joyeuſe, impatient to acquire the laurels, which the ſuperiority of his force ſeemed to enſure him, loſt not a moment in quitting Paris, and by rapid marches advanced to ſeek the king of Navarre (12).

Reſumes the command.

If the fate of that prince, which drew to a criſis, powerfully attracted the national attention; the ſolicitude of the king was not leſs painfully awakened to the tranſactions on the frontiers of Lorrain and Alſace. The Proteſtant ſtates, offended at the contemptuous and indignant anſwer given to their embaſſadors, in the preceding year; had aſſembled a very conſiderable army, compoſed of various nations. The Cantons of Bern and Zurich, who profeſſed the reformed religion, animated by zeal, and in defiance of the general treaties ſubſiſting between Henry and the Helvetic confederacy, levied near twenty thouſand infantry. Germany furniſhed four thouſand foot, and twelve thouſand cavalry; which were joined by the duke of Bouillon ſoon afterwards, at the head of above two thouſand French troops. Regardleſs of the Imperial mandate, iſſued by Rodolph the Second, who enjoined them to diſband their forces; they aſſembled near Straſburg, and prepared to commence their march.

Germans prepare to invade France.

20th Aug.

(12) De Thou, vol. x. p. 5—10. Davila, p. 627—630. L'Etoile, p. 227. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 314 and 315.

So

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So vaſt a body, if they had been properly conducted, might have ſpeedily decided the conteſt in favour of the party whoſe cauſe they eſpouſed. But, far from acting in union, or obeying any common head, they were deficient in military diſcipline, deſtitute of ſubordination, and eaſily inflamed to mutiny upon every occaſion. Dhona, who exerciſed the ſupreme command, in the name, and by the authority of Caſimir, uncle to the elector palatine, poſſeſſed ſcarcely any other requiſites, except perſonal courage; and the duke of Bouillon's youth and inexperience diſqualified him for ſo arduous an employment. Notwithſtanding theſe vices in the original formation of the army, which did not maniſeſt themſelves till they were matured by various circumſtances; their entrance ſpread univerſal conſternation. No force which the duke of Lorrain could oppoſe to them, was adequate to impede their progreſs; and the king of France did not betray any extraordinary alacrity to riſk his perſonal ſafety, and to endanger the monarchy, by attempting to ſtem the courſe of an inundation, which muſt ſwallow up the forces of "the League," before it could approach the throne. So convinced were the Germans and Switzers, of Henry's reluctance to diſpute their paſſage, that they regarded themſelves rather as his allies, than his enemies; and were deluded with the continual expectation, that, on their advancing towards the interior provinces, he would join them to cruſh their common opponents. Such a meaſure was not only juſtifiable, but, almoſt indiſpenſable, after the open attacks made on Henry's authority; and muſt have rendered him the arbiter of "the League." But, his irreſolution, his averſion to the Hugonots, and the habitual indolence which indiſpoſed him for every exertion of magnitude, overcame all other conſiderations; and though during a ſhort interview with Guiſe, which took place

Diſſentions in the army.

They enter Lorrain.

Expectations formed by them, of aſſiſtance from Henry.

July.

place at Meaux, his ſuſpicions had been awakened and augmented relative to the intentions of the princes of Lorrain; yet, he iſſued orders to aſſemble forces, and prepared to oppoſe in perſon the paſſage of the Germans acroſs the Loire (13). 1587.

Able conduct of the duke of Guiſe.

It muſt be confeſſed, that in no part of his life did the great endowments and ſuperior capacity of the duke of Guiſe diſplay themſelves more eminently, than againſt the foreign army with which France was menaced. Uncertain of any effectual ſupport from the crown, and conſcious that he had injured his ſovereign beyond the reach of pardon: reproached by the duke of Lorrain, with having produced the invaſion and deſolation of his dominions: unable to collect under his ſtandard a body of forces adequate to meet the enemy in the field, and to try the iſſue of a battle: beſet on every ſide with difficulties; the intrepidity of his character, and the deciſion which marked all his actions, ſupplied theſe numerous defects. Having advanced in perſon to reconnoitre the Germans, and being reduced to the neceſſity of retreating, or of engaging under manifeſt diſadvantages; he preferred death to the appearance of flight. His firmneſs, and the ſkill of his movements, extricated him from the danger, while it augmented the confidence of his followers. Retiring before the invaders, as they penetrated into Champagne, he ſtill contrived to harraſs them in their march; while the duke of Mayenne having aſſembled troops in his government of Burgundy, and acting in concert with him, hung upon their rear, intercepted their convoys, and began to make them experience the inconveniencies of famine.

Magnanimity and courage of his meaſures.

Notwithſtanding theſe obſtacles to their progreſs, they might with eaſe have atchieved the great ob-

Diſcord in the German camp.

(13) De Thou, vol. x. p. 21—27. Davila, p. 631—635.

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ject of the expedition, and effected a junction with the king of Navarre. Chatillon, ſon to the celebrated Coligni, and who inherited no inconſiderable portion of his father's military talents, having been detached to meet and conduct them, earneſtly exhorted the leaders to advance towards the ſources of the Loire, and to croſs the river without delay. But, neither Dhona, nor any of the other chiefs, were poſſeſſed of ſufficient authority to enforce ſo ſalutary a counſel. The various and diſcordant parts of the army were animated by no common ſentiment, except the deſire of plunder. They dreaded the rugged and mountainous countries, through which they muſt, of neceſſity, paſs, in order to avail themſelves of Chatillon's advice; and, ſeduced by the defenceleſs, as well as fertile nature of the provinces which extend from the limits of Champagne to the gates of Orleans and Chartres, they demanded to be led into them, as abounding with proviſions, and rich in the opportunities of pillage. To this injudicious meaſure, was entirely to be attributed their deſtruction. The duke of Guiſe, informed of their internal diſputes, vigilant to take every advantage, and revolving in his mind the means of attacking them when too far engaged to retreat; continued to keep them conſtantly in fight. They were, nevertheleſs, ſuſtained by the fallacious expectation, that the king would ſtill declare in their favor. But, when they beheld Henry himſelf, at the head of a ſecond army, occupy the banks of the Loire for a conſiderable extent, and take the moſt active meaſures to preclude them from entering Touraine, in which province they hoped to find a means of paſſing the river; their conſternation exceeded any limit. Such was their perilous and almoſt deſperate ſituation, at the period, when, in another quarter of the kingdom, the affairs of the Hugonots were completely re-

Miſconduct and errors of the chiefs.

Perilous ſituation of the army.

eſtabliſhed

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eſtabliſhed by the valor and fortune of the king of Navarre (14).

1587. Battle of Coutras.

The victory of Coutras, which produced ſo beneficial a change, was principally due to the raſhneſs and imprudence of the duke of Joyeuſe. That favorite, whoſe ambition prompted him to hazard a general engagement; unwilling to divide the honor with Matignon, who was haſtening to reinforce him, and confident in the numbers and quality of his troops; felt no other apprehenſion, except that the enemy would not wait for his approach. But, the king of Navarre, far from avoiding an action, having aſſembled a ſmall body of hardy and experienced veterans, croſſed the river Dordogne; and the two armies faced each other near the town of Coutras, in Guienne. The contraſt was not leſs ſingular than was preſented by the Perſians and Macedonians, in the plains of Iſſus. Among the royal forces, every diſplay of magnificence and luxury was viſible; while the Proteſtants, caſed in armour, ruſty and defaced by the inclemency of the weather, exhibited a martial and rough appearance. Nor was the arrogance and want of ſubordination in the Catholic troops, leſs forcibly oppoſed to the diſcipline and ſevere obedience of the Hugonots. The effect correſponded to theſe cauſes; and never was triumph more rapid, or more compleat, than at Coutras. Above two thouſand of the royaliſts were left dead upon the field, and all the baggage, artillery, and ſtandards, fell into the hands of the conquerors. Joyeuſe himſelf, after having diſplayed the greateſt perſonal courage, was put to death, although he offered a prodigious ſum to obtain his ranſom. The Proteſtants, incenſed at the ſlaughter of their comrades in Poitou,

Aſpect of the two armies.

20th Oct.

Victory of the king of Navarre.

(14) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 317—320. Davila, p. 637—646. De Thou, vol. x. p. 25—42. D'Aub. vol. iii. p. 62 and 63.

long

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long refuſed to grant quarter; and it required all the exertion of the king of Navarre to ſtop the carnage. His humanity towards the vanquiſhed, and peculiarly to the priſoners who remained in his poſſeſſion, was not leſs conſpicuous than his valor in the action, and drew eulogiums from his enemies. The victory was rendered more memorable and conſpicuous, from its having been the only one obtained by the Hugonots, during the courſe of more than twenty-ſeven years, ſince the conſpiracy of Amboiſe, and the commencement of the civil wars. Henry received the intelligence, not only without any emotions of concern, but, rather with ſentiments of pleaſure. He wiſhed to compel the king of Navarre to accept the conditions which had been tendered him; but, was no way deſirous of his deſtruction, or of any event that could augment the power of their common enemies. The ſpoils of Joyeuſe ſerved to decorate his rival, who obtained from the king the government of Normandy, and the poſt of high admiral, notwithſtanding the importunities and ſolicitation of Guiſe, who vainly exerted himſelf to obtain the latter employment for Briſſac, one of his own adherents. To theſe ample gratifications, Henry's profuſion, which ſeemed to know no bounds, added the governments of Saintonge and Angoumois; donations, only calculated to encreaſe the general deteſtation, in which Epernon was held by all the adherents of the family of Lorrain (15).

Sentiments of Henry, on Joyeuſe's defeat and death.

Scarcely any advantage reſulted to the Germans and Switzers, from ſo brilliant a victory, obtained by the king of Navarre. That prince, unable to retain under his banners the troops with whom he had conquered, or to prevent the nobility and gentry

King of Navarre returns into Gaſcony.

(15) D'Aub. vol. iii. p. 48—58. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 320—322. De Thou, vol. x. p. 12—18. Davila, p. 646—651.

who

who voluntarily adhered to him, from withdrawing to their caſtles; inſtead of advancing towards the Loire, immediately returned into Gaſcony. Perhaps, his attachment to the counteſs of Grammont, at whoſe feet he depoſited the trophies of his valour; and the facility with which, at every period of his life, he ſacrificed his intereſts to the allurements of gallantry; might induce him to adopt a conduct, by which his glory was not a little obſcured. It proved deſtructive to the foreign army, conducted by Dhona, for whoſe extrication, the greateſt exertions would not have been more than ſufficient, and who, thus abandoned, could neither proceed with confidence, nor retreat with ſafety. Embarraſſed with plunder, incommoded by a prodigious quantity of baggage, and diminiſhed by the diſeaſes reſulting from their intemperance, they no longer inſpired the terror which had preceded and accompanied their entrance into France. As they continued their march, various bodies of troops, commanded by the princes of Lorrain, or by the king in perſon, ſtraitened their quarters, and augmented their diſtreſs. The duke of Guiſe, anxious to engroſs the whole reputation reſulting from their defeat, exerted equal vigilance in diſcovering, as he did promptitude in profiting of their errors. While, on one hand, he conſtantly placed himſelf between the enemy and the city of Paris, with a view to prevent their approaching the capital; he, on the other, waited to ſeize the firſt favourable opportunity of attacking them with advantage. Fortune ſoon preſented him the occaſion; and he inſtantly embraced it, in contradiction to the cautious advice of the duke of Mayenne, who was not induced without reluctance, to commit the fortune of their family to ſo imminent a hazard. Having obtained information, that a conſiderable number of the French and German cavalry, was lodged at the town of Vimory, he cauſed them to be

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State of the German army.

They are harraſſed by the duke of Guiſe,

and defeated at Vimory.

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be ſurrounded during the night; and after an obſtinate reſiſtance, during which, Dhona, their commander, eſcaped with difficulty, his troops were either routed, or put to the ſword (16).

They ſtill advance towards the Loire.

Notwithſtanding this defeat, which inſpired the troops of "the League" with as much confidence, as it diminiſhed the ardor of the confederates, they continued to advance, in hopes of penetrating through the intermediate provinces to the banks of the Loire, and paſſing it near Saumur. Their courage was not a little revived by the junction of the prince of Conti, Francis of Bourbon, whoſe high quality, and proximity of blood to the king of Navarre, ſufficiently demonſtrated the intereſt which he took in their ſucceſs. His arrival was celebrated by feſtivities and teſtimonies of public joy, which were augmented by the intelligence of the victory obtained at Coutras. But, all theſe premature demonſtrations of ſatisfaction were ſpeedily ſucceeded by a reverſe. Dhona having imprudently quartered part of his forces in the little town of Auneau, where they remained during ſome days, for the purpoſe of recovering their fatigues; Guiſe, who had encamped at Dourdan, found means to corrupt the governor of the fortreſs. In conſideration of a ſum of money, he promiſed to admit the duke's troops through the caſtle itſelf; and the enterprize was executed with the moſt complete ſucceſs. The enemy, unprepared for defence, and unapprehenſive of danger, were inveſted on every ſide, attacked, and cut to pieces before they could make any effectual reſiſtance. Two thouſand Germans periſhed in the action. Dhona, having effected his eſcape, at the head of a ſmall body of cavalry, ſafely reached the other diviſions of his army, who were ſtationed in the vicinity of Auneau. He inſtantly drew

Defeat of the Germans, at Auneau.

24th Nov.

(16) De Thou, vol. x. p. 43—45. Davila, p. 651—656.

them

them up in order of battle, and urged them to attack the victors, during the security of their recent triumph. The French auxiliaries, commanded by Chatillon, joined him in these entreaties, and represented the facility of the attempt. But, no arguments could prevail on the Switzers and Germans. Struck with terror, they refused to be led against an enemy, who had twice surprized and defeated them, nor were any efforts effectual to vanquish their repugnance. Retreat, or, more properly, flight, accompanied with all the calamities inseparable from a dispirited army, laboring under the accumulated evils of famine, cold, and sickness, became unavoidable. The Switzers, separating from their allies, concluded an accommodation with the duke of Epernon, and retired to their own country; while the Germans, exhausted, diminished, and sinking in the roads, began to listen to similar propositions. In this desperate emergency, Chatillon proposed to conduct them towards the province of the Vivarais, where they would be joined by fresh troops, and would find every refreshment necessary to recruit their force. He offered to be their guide during the march, which could not be long; and he represented, with energy and eloquence, the infallible destruction impending over them, if, deluded by a pretended negociation ratified in the name of the king, they trusted to the mercy of "the League," who had already thrown off all respect or obedience to the crown (17).

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Retreat, and separation of the foreign troops.

Ineffectual exhortations of Chatillon.

His remonstrances being fruitless, and the spirit of mutiny which pervaded the army, rendering his stay dangerous to himself; he quitted the camp, attended by a few resolute and determined followers. Penetrating through the bodies of the enemy, who

He quits the army.

(17) Davila, p. 656—661. De Thou, vol. x. p. 45—60.

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surrounded him on every side, he soon reached the provinces where the Hugonot forces maintained a superiority: while Dhona, and his associates, no longer restrained by any considerations of honor, or even of prudence, consented to evacuate the French dominions, with their colours furled, and escorted to the frontiers of the kingdom. Conditions so ignominious did not secure their safe retreat; and the princes of Lorrain, regardless of the stipulations, waited for them beyond the confines. In the county of Burgundy, and even in the principality of Montbelliard, the miserable relics of their once formidable army, were slaughtered by the duke of Guise's troops, or massacred by the peasants. Not satisfied with nearly exterminating them, the soldiery of the duke of Lorrain exercised unprecedented cruelties on the inhabitants of the country of Montbelliard, and proceeded to the most enormous excesses of violence, rapine, and bloodshed. Scarcely five hundred Germans, exhausted with fatigue, and nearly in a state of nakedness, reached their own homes in safety (18).

Capitulation of Dhona.

Destruction of the Germans.

Henry was little more than a passive spectator of a series of victories, which covered his most inveterate enemy with so much glory. He received the intelligence of the defeat of the Germans at Auneau, without manifesting any expressions of concern; and he accepted graciously, the trophies and standards sent him by the duke of Guise: but, he was not internally less wounded by the conviction that "the League," elevated with success, would soon turn their arms against himself. The opportunity of crushing the house of Lorrain, which had presented itself, was irrecoverably lost; and it seemed difficult, if not impossible, to expect, that the duke of Guise, raised above the rank of a subject, would

Conduct of Henry.

His embarrassments.

(18) D'Aub. vol. iii. p. 65—68. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 323—326. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 61—65. Davila, p. 661—663. Chron Noven. vol. i. p. 37—42. Vie du Duc d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 170—178.

remain

remain long in a ſtate of repoſe. The recent events of the war, by an obvious and unavoidable compariſon, had conduced to humble the crown, in the ſame proportion that they gave ſtrength to its enemies; and the inhabitants of Paris, alienated more than ever from a king, whom they perſiſted to regard as ſecretly allied with the Hugonots; knew no bounds to their admiration for the deliverer and avenger of France. They even accuſed Epernon with favouring the eſcape of the foreign army, which muſt otherwiſe have been put to the ſword; and they conſidered Henry as participating in the intended crime of his favorite. Under theſe impreſſions, that prince, returning from the campaign, made his public entry into the metropolis, with the decorations of a conqueror: while the duke of Guiſe repairing to Nancy, the capital of Lorrain, and ſummoning a counſel compoſed of his neareſt friends, prepared to improve his late advantages, and to undertake more important enterprizes againſt the dignity and perſon of his ſovereign (19).

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He returns to Paris. 23d December.

(19) De Thou, vol. x. p. 63—65.

That Henry the Third not only expected his own extrication from the toils which "the League" had wrapt about him, by means of the German army; but, that he even favored the progreſs of thoſe invaders, as much as he could venture to do, conſiſtent with his own ſafety; are facts inconteſtible. There is an internal evidence of it, in his whole conduct; in the reluctance with which he took the field; in the poſition which he choſe, at a diſtance from the probable ſcene of hoſtilities, in the province of the Orleanois; in the coldneſs with which he received the intelligence of the duke of Guiſe's ſucceſs at Vimory and at Auneau; laſtly, in theterms of accommodation, by which he attempted, though vainly in a great meaſure, to ſave the remains of the Germans from the fury of the princes of Lorrain. Davila aſſerts it, and De Thou inſinuates it, throughout their whole narration of the events of that campaign. But, if any doubt could remain upon the point, it is completely done away, by the avowal of Henry himſelf, in the cleareſt and moſt unequivocal terms, contained in the curious and important diſpatch of the Engliſh embaſſador at Paris, ſir Edward Strafford, to queen Elizabeth, dated "the 25th February, 1588;" two months after the king's return to the capital. The letter is to be found in the "Hardwick State Papers," vol. i. page 251 to 264. In a ſecret interview with the Engliſh miniſter, managed with the utmoſt caution, and during the whole courſe of which there was no third perſon preſent, Henry unveiled his lamentable condition; beſought Elizabeth's friendly aid to extricate him; and particularly

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1587. Foreign affairs. Execution of Mary, queen of Scots.

During the courſe of ſo many internal events which occupied Henry's attention, he ſeemed to have loſt ſight of the foreign intereſts and concerns of the nation. The execution of his ſiſter-in-law, Mary, queen of Scots, and dowager-queen of France, had been ſwallowed up in his own immediate embarraſſments. The intimate connexion of blood and friendſhip between that unfortunate princeſs, and the family of Guiſe, neceſſarily diminiſhed, if it did not extinguiſh the intereſt which he felt in her misfortunes; and it was doubted, whether the interceſſion made in her behalf by Bellievre, the French embaſſador, originated in affection and ſympathy, or was only a piece of ſtate diſſimulation. It is certain that the remonſtrance neither mollified Elizabeth, nor protracted the deſtiny of the Scottiſh queen. In the affairs of the Netherlands, which Leiceſter, the Engliſh commander, had embroiled, as well as greatly injured the reputation of the United States, the king of France took no part; and he appeared to view, with the ſame indifference, the vaſt preparations making in the ports of Spain and Portugal, where Philip the Second had long been occupied in fitting out his invincible Armada, deſigned for the conqueſt of England.

larly, entreated her to exhort the king of Navarre to embrace the Catholic religion, as the only means to diſarm "the League." He clearly confeſſed to Stafford, that he had hoped for the deſtruction of the family of Lorrain, from the invaſion of the Germans: that, in the expectation of it, and from no other motive, he had declined and refuſed Elizabeth's repeated offers, to ſtop the entrance of the foreign army: and that he purpoſely took his own ſtation at a diſtance from them, and avoided, to the laſt moment, any attack upon their forces, till it became impoſſible for him longer to adhere to ſuch a conduct. He bitterly, and with expreſſions of indignation, reprobated their cowardice, or incapacity, in not demoliſhing the feeble army, commanded by the dukes of Guiſe and Mayenne; or, at leaſt, in not ravaging and deſolating, as they might have done, the eſtates and territories of all the adherents of "the League," who muſt, in ſuch caſe, have had recourſe to his interpoſition, to reſcue them from total ruin. He claimed, notwithſtanding, the merit of having ſaved thoſe of the Germans who eſcaped, by the treaty which the duke of Epernon concluded, for their ſafe return into their own country. No ſtate paper, publiſhed in the preſent century, merits more attention, or lays open ſo much of the private feelings of Henry with reſpect to the duke of Guiſe, as the diſpatch from Stafford to Elizabeth.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

State of France, after the defeat of the Germans.—Proceedings of the princes of Lorrain—Death of the prince of Condé.—Conſpiracies againſt Henry.—Arrival of the duke of Guiſe, at Paris.—Inſurrection.—Flight of the king.—Negotiations.—Treaty between Henry, and the duke of Guiſe.—Convocation of the ſtates-general, at Blois.—Henry determines to aſſaſſinate the duke of Guiſe.—Meaſures adopted for its execution.—Aſſaſſination of the duke and cardinal of Guiſe.

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1587.

State of France, and of Henry.

SUCH was the critical ſituation to which the affairs of France were reduced, that it was evident ſome great convulſion muſt ſpeedily follow. The invaſion of the Germans, which, if it had been conducted with vigor and capacity, muſt have driven the family of Guiſe to implore protection of Henry; had, in conſequence of the errors and misfortunes of the expedition, thrown a prodigious weight into the oppoſite ſcale. Inſtead of advancing to form a conjunction with them, as had been concerted; the king of Navarre, terrified at the intelligence of their defeat, and expecting the united forces of the crown and of "the League" to overwhelm him; retired, notwithſtanding his recent victory over Joyeuſe, to the city of Rochelle. Henry, who had only acted a negative part in the operations of the late campaign, and who had derived from it neither ſecurity, nor reputation; returned to a capital, where his perſon and his dignity were equally expoſed to perpetual inſult. The populace, more than ever intoxicated with admiration of the duke of Guiſe, to whoſe valor and military ſkill, the expulſion of the foreign army was excluſively due, felt an augmented alienation

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alienation and contempt for their ſovereign. All the treaſonable machinations and conſpiracies, which had been, in ſome meaſure, ſuſpended while the event of the recent tranſactions was uncertain, were renewed without apprehenſion. The king, agitated with continual fears, diſtruſtful of his miniſters, doubtful of the adherence even of his own mother, who indirectly favored the houſe of Lorrain, and no longer able to fix on any ſyſtem which promiſed him a probable, or ſpeedy extrication from his embarraſſments; remained inactive and ſupine, at a moment which demanded the utmoſt energy and deciſion.

Deciſive meaſures of the duke of Guiſe.

On the other hand, Guiſe, conſcious of his advantages, prompt to improve them, and inclined from his character to embrace the moſt adventurous expedients for the completion of all his projects; proceeded inſtantly to avail himſelf of his augmented

January.

conſideration. In an aſſembly of the princes of his family, it was determined, notwithſtanding the reluctance manifeſted by ſome of them, who were inclined to more cautious or moderate counſels; that an attack ſhould be immediately made on the capital and territories of the duke of Bouillon. That prince was lately deceaſed at Geneva, without male iſſue; and as his contracted dominions devolved to his ſiſter, whoſe youth and ſex diſqualified her for making any vigorous defence, the occaſion of invading them was too favorable to be neglected.

Petition, preſented to Henry, by the League.

They reſolved, at the ſame time, to preſent a new petition to Henry in the name and behalf of "the League," by which he was entreated to unite himſelf in cloſer tyes with the confederacy. The articles contained various requiſitions, calculated to degrade the throne, and to elevate on its ruins, the houſe of Guiſe. They demanded the eſtabliſhment of the inquiſition; the extirpation of hereſy; the ceſſion of new places of ſecurity, and the confirmation of thoſe already held by the adherents of "the League;"

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together with an army, to be maintained by the king, in order to prevent the return of the Germans into France. Inſolent and exorbitant as theſe propoſitions appeared, they were not rejected by Henry, who only ſought by evaſion and delays, to elude their accompliſhment: while emiſſaries of the Guiſes, ſcattered over the metropolis, already began to reduce into order the tumultuous and diſcordant parts of which the faction was compoſed, and to prepare matters for the final cataſtrophé (1). He eludes it.

The affairs of the Hugonots, involved in diſtreſs by the defeat of the Germans, were rendered ſtill more gloomy at this period, by the unexpected loſs of one of their principal ſupports. Henry, prince of Condé, after having ſucceſsfully encountered every danger in the field, was carried off by a death, no leſs ſudden, than tragical. Inconteſtible ſymptoms of poiſon appeared during the progreſs of his diſeaſe, as well as after his diſſolution. Suſpicions, too well authenticated, fell upon the princeſs, his wife, who was ſeized, and impriſoned by order of the magiſtrates of the town of St. John d'Angely in Saintonge, the ſcene of the tranſaction. Her pregnancy, and the birth of a ſon, whom ſhe brought into the world ſix months ſubſequent to her huſband's deceaſe; rather than any proofs of her innocence, preſerved her from a more ſevere enquiry and puniſhment. She was, notwithſtanding, detained in confinement above ſix years. Brillaud, one of the prince's domeſtics, convicted of having been acceſſory to his death, was torn in pieces by wild horſes. Almoſt all the qualities which can combine to form an exalted, if not an amiable character, met in the prince of Condé. Exempt from the irregularities and gallantries of his couſin, the king of Navarre, he equalled him in valor, humanity, affability, pru- Death of the prince of Condé. 5th March. Suſpicions of poiſon. His character.

(1) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 236—238. Davila, p. 669.

dence,

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dence, and liberality. Unfortunate in all his enterprizes; baniſhed to an obſcure place in a diſtant province: ejected from his government of Picardy: neglected by his ſovereign: perſecuted by the Catholics: driven, during the fury of civil war, in which he had been nouriſhed from his infancy, to the ſevereſt extremities of poverty, exile, and hardſhip; his fortitude raiſed him above misfortune, but, could not ſurmount his evil deſtiny. He expired in the vigor of his age, at thirty-five years; and the intelligence of his melancholy fate excited various and contradictory emotions. The king of Navarre bewailed his loſs, and undertook to avenge it, by a rigorous proſecution of his murderers. Henry, occupied in celebrating the funeral of his favourite, Joyeuſe; and ſurrounded with dangers that menaced his own ſafety, ſcarcely appeared ſenſible to ſo affecting an event. The Pariſians, by whom the prince was deteſted on account of his zealous adherence to the reformed religion, made public rejoicings to commemorate it: while, the duke of Guiſe, mindful of the uncertainty of human affairs, and who knew how to eſteem the virtues even of an enemy; ſhed tears on receiving the news, and gave proofs of the moſt unfeigned concern (2.)

Different emotions, excited by his death.

Theſe

(2) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 330 and 331. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 242—247. Letters of Henry the Fourth, in Voltaire, vol. x. p. 232—235. Hiſt. de Bouillon, vol. i. p. 408. Mem. p. ſer. à l'Hiſ. de France, p. 243, 244. D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. iii. p. 72.

The prince of Condé's death is not to be ranked among thoſe problematical, uncertain accounts of poiſon, with which every hiſtory abounds, and which may frequently be attributed to malignity, or credulity. By the unanimous, and undiſputed teſtimony of all the contemporary writers, the prince died of poiſon: but, it is more difficult to determine, on whom the guilt of ſo atrocious a crime principally falls. Brillaud, who was executed, ſhewed marks of inſanity; and his depoſition, as de Thou aſſerts, was obſcure, or defective in many particulars. Belcaſtel, page of the princeſs of Condé, and a valet de chambre, were accuſed of having adminiſtered the potion, which cauſed his death. They fled; and the former eſcaped out of France; but, the valet was ſeized at Poitiers, and brought to St. John d'Angely. It was pretended, that the page had been criminally intimate with the princeſs;

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Defigns and irreſolution of the duke of Guiſe.

April.

Theſe generous, but, tranſitory ſenſations, were ſpeedily obliterated by the great and hazardous experiment which he was, at length, about to make; and on the ſucceſs of which depended his honor, his fortune, and his life. Having diſpatched a number of able, and experienced officers to Paris, who might make the neceſſary diſpoſitions previous to his perſonal appearance: and having ſtationed five hundred cavalry under the command of the duke of Aumale, in the neighbouring villages; he advanced to Goneſſe, in the vicinity of the capital, with intention to enter the ſuburbs. But, information being received, that the king had cauſed a body of four thouſand Switzers to approach the metropolis, the duke, terrified, and apprehenſive of being arreſted, returned to Soiſſons. His adherents, nevertheleſs, continued their plots againſt Henry's perſon; and although conſtantly diſcovered, yet, as no exertion was made to ſeize and bring them to puniſhment, their audacity continually encreaſed. At the head of the moſt inveterate enemies of the king, was the ducheſs of Montpenſier, ſiſter to the duke of Guiſe. Irritated by ſome ſarcaſtic and humiliating diſcloſures which he had made of her perſonal defects, ſhe determined on revenge; and her implacable ſpirit ani-

Project of the ducheſs of Montpenſier.

princeſs; and that ſhe was pregnant by him, at the time of her huſband's death. The king of Navarre, who went immediately in perſon to St. John d'Angely, and who muſt have known every circumſtance which could elucidate the tranſaction; expreſsly accuſes the princeſs of being privy to, and an accomplice in the prince's death. De Thou, who wrote under the reign of Henry the Fourth, and at a period of time, when the princeſs was declared to be abſolved from the imputation, ſpeaks guardedly reſpecting her; but, his opinion of her guilt, is evidently to be ſeen. Mezerai poſitively aſſerts it, at a greater diſtance of time. In 1596, ſhe was liberated, by order of Henry the Fourth, and all the proceedings againſt her were burnt, as having been informal, and contrary to the privileges of her rank. L'Etoile, in his "Journal d'Henry trois," a contemporary work, makes no ſcruple of naming the princeſs, as the perſon, at whoſe inſtigation Belcaſtel poiſoned the prince. She did not bring into the world a ſon, till the 1ſt of September, 1588, near ſix calendar months ſubſequent to her huſband's death. He was afterwards Henry the Second, prince of Condé, and was father to the great Condé, ſo celebrated in the hiſtory of France.

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1588. 22d April.

mated the Parisians to the most desperate enterprizes. It was resolved to attack the Louvre by force, to cut in pieces the guards, and to imprison the king. When this plan became impracticable, in consequence of the precautions taken upon Poulain's deposition; a new project was set on foot, to seize him on his return from Vincennes, at which time he was usually accompanied only by a few of his guards. Henry received intimation of the design; and having sent to Paris for an escort of cavalry, was by them conducted in safety through the city. Driven to despair by so many unsuccessful attempts; expecting hourly vengeance; and unable longer to retain the numerous adherents who clamorously demanded to be employed; the heads of the enterprize sent a messenger to the duke of Guise, imploring him, as he valued the safety of all those who had embarked with him in the same common cause, not to delay his immediate appearance (3.)

Alarm of the malcontents.

Henry prohibits the duke of Guise from coming to Paris.

This event had long been foreseen by the king, as equally probable and alarming. With a view to prevent it, he condescended to an act unworthy the majesty of the throne, by dispatching Bellièvre, one of his ministers, to Soissons, where the duke then was, together with the cardinal of Bourbon, and his principal adherents. Bellièvre's message was rather to deprecate, than prohibit his arrival; and Henry adopted the language of supplication, instead of the requisition of authority. Far from yielding obedience to the royal injunction, the duke, in turn, had recourse to complaints and to excuses; leaving it uncertain whether he would obey, or disregard the order. New messengers were, therefore, sent to him from court, to reiterate the prohibition. But, Guise, who had embraced the final determination of appearing in per-

(3) Davila, p. 669—675, and 678. De Thou, vol. x. p. 247—251.

son

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fon to extricate, or periſh with his friends in the metropolis; contrived to elude them, by another road. Entering Paris with only ſeven attendants, he alighted at the reſidence of the queen-mother; who, amazed, and almoſt overcome by ſo unexpected a viſit, betrayed her concern, notwithſtanding the expreſſions of ſatisfaction with which ſhe endeavoured to conceal her emotions. She inſtantly informed the king of his arrival, and ſignified her intention of bringing the duke to pay his reſpects to Henry at the Louvre.

9th May. His arrival.

That infatuated prince, who had always deceived himſelf by an opinion that Guiſe would not preſume, in contradiction to ſo many expreſſions of his will, to inſult him in his own palace; was unable to reſolve on the manner of his reception and treatment. In a haſty and diſorderly conſultation, held during the interval which elapſed between the intelligence of his approach, and his actual appearance, various propoſitions were debated. It was even agitated, to put him to death in the cloſet where Henry meant to give him audience; and the king did not appear to be averſe from ſo violent an expedient: but the more timid, or more prudent part of his council induced him to reject the advice. Meanwhile, Guiſe, conducted by Catherine of Medicis, and followed by an immenſe crowd who preſſed to give him marks of their attachment and devotion, proceeded on foot towards the Louvre. As he paſſed along, the inhabitants of the metropolis, and peculiarly, the women, loaded him with benedictions, and expreſſed the moſt unbounded veneration for his perſon. The affability and popularity of his deportment confirmed his empire over the people, and rendered them capable of every ſacrifice, or exertion, to ſecure his ſafety. He was, notwithſtanding, appalled at his entrance into the Louvre, when he found himſelf encloſed between the

Indeciſion of the king.

Reception of Guiſe by the Pariſians.

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the Switzers of the royal guard, the archers, and other ſoldiers, drawn up, with Grillon at their head, and who received him in deep ſilence.

His viſit to Henry.

Henry's reception of the duke was cold and even angry; nor did he ſeem to be either mollified or convinced by the excuſes which were offered to juſtify ſo daring a meaſure. Guiſe, apprehenſive of being detained, conſcious that he was in the power of a ſovereign whom he had inſulted and incenſed, ſurrounded by enemies, and aware that every moment of his ſtay might endanger his retreat; ſhortened the interview by pretending fatigue, and withdrew, unmoleſted, from the royal preſence (4). The two ſucceeding days were paſſed in continual negociations, which only ſhewed their mutual diſtruſt. A long converſation took place at the queen-mother's palace, between the king and the duke; where the latter, no longer reſtrained by the prudential conſiderations which had influenced his conduct in the Louvre, manifeſted his pretenſions without diſguiſe. They were ſo extenſive and inſolent, that, diſpoſed as the king was to make numerous ſacrifices in order to obtain peace, he rejected them, and prepared for defence. But, after having allowed his enemies to gain poſſeſſion of the capital, to inflame the minds of the people, and to make proviſion of arms, leaders, and every requiſite for commencing active war, it was not eaſy to reduce them within the limits of ſubmiſſion. Warned by the ſame vigilant and faithful ſpy, who had ſo often given him information, that nocturnal meetings were held at the duke of Guiſe's houſe, and that the conſpirators were deliberating to proceed to the laſt extremities of violence and rebellion; he iſſued orders to introduce four thouſand Switzers, under the command of Biron, and a con-

Demands of Guiſe.

Henry introduces the Swiſs troops.

(4) Davila, p. 679—683. De Thou, vol. x. p. 253—255.

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CHAP. VII. 1588. 12th May.

siderable number of his guards, who had been quartered in the villages near Paris. They entered early in the morning, were met by Henry in person at the gates, and marched to occupy the principal squares or places in the metropolis, without opposition.

His irresolute conduct.

Such was the consternation occasioned by the arrival and entrance of the royal forces, and so unprepared were the inhabitants for effectual resistance; that if vigorous measures had been pursued before the first impressions of terror had subsided, the king might have disarmed, or rendered himself master of the city. But, the same pusillanimous, and timid policy, which had enabled "the League" to continue their operations for many years against the crown, rendered ineffectual the only effort exerted for its preservation. The exhortations of Catherine of Medicis, who was inclined to favor the Guises, and anxious to prevent a rupture; strengthened by the advice of Villequier, governor of Paris; induced Henry to issue peremptory orders to the commanders of the troops recently stationed, to use no violence, and to remain entirely on the defensive. Encouraged by the tame and passive behaviour of the soldiery, and after passing rapidly from the extreme of fear, to that of insolence; the people, after some hours, began to assemble tumultuously. Conducted and directed by the officers whom the duke of Guise had purposely scattered among them, while he himself affected to remain quiet within his house; the populace drove the Switzers and guards from all their posts. At the same time, advancing, as the others retired, they placed barricadoes at the end of every street, stretched chains across, and secured their acquisition (5).

Insurrection of the Parisians.

(5) Davila, p. 684—690. De Thou, vol. x. p. 256—260.

On

CHAP. VIII.

1588. They barricade the ſtreets.

On the firſt intelligence received at court, that the citizens having ſhut up their ſhops, and rung the alarm bells, had collected, with intent to oppoſe the troops; Henry ſent directions to Grillon to occupy certain places, calculated to give him poſſeſſion of the quarter in which the duke of Guiſe reſided; and from whence an inſurrection was moſt to be apprehended. But, the order arrived too late: the royal forces, reſtrained from reſiſtance, by the prohibition iſſued to fire upon the inhabitants, were already ſurrounded, and equally incapable of moving forwards, or of effecting their retreat: while, the barricadoes advancing regularly, were puſhed within a few paces of the Louvre, and the face of the body guard. Content with obliging the French troops to extinguiſh their matches, and to ground their arms; the populace ſpared their perſons. But, the Switzers, more obnoxious, as foreigners and mercenaries, being aſſaulted, were plundered; and near forty of them were put to the ſword. During ſo diſgraceful a proceeding, the king, inveſted in the Louvre, the gate of which was defended by about five hundred gentlemen and ſoldiers; beſieged by his own ſubjects; expecting to be attacked, and afraid to expoſe his perſon to the inſults of a furious and exaſperated mob; remained in a ſituation equally perilous and ignominious. The marſhals Biron, and Aumont, having ventured to harangue the people, and to perſuade them to diſperſe, were ſaluted with ſeveral muſket balls; and the king, incapable of long reſiſtance, might be conſidered as at the mercy of the inſurgents.

Dangerous and humiliating ſituation of the king.

Conduct of the duke of Guiſe.

No triumph could be more complete on the part of the duke of Guiſe, who, if he had profited of the ardor of the Pariſians, might have inſtantly, by force, or by negociation, ſeized on Henry himſelf. But, unprepared, or unwilling to proceed to the laſt extremity, he preferred a different mode of action. Quitting his houſe, in which he had hitherto choſen

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to remain, as a paſſive ſpectator of the commotion; he appeared in the ſtreets, on horſeback, unarmed, with only a trunchion in his hand. His voice and preſence inſtantly ſuſpended the tumult. Satisfied with having excited the rage of the Pariſians, and directed it againſt the king; he checked and controuled its further progreſs. As he proceeded through the different quarters of the city, he cauſed the royal troops, who were every where diſarmed, to be ſet at liberty, and conducted in ſafety to the Louvre, bare-headed, and their arms trailed along the ground. But, attentive, while he gave this proof of his unlimited aſcendant over the people, to ſecure the great object of his exertions; he commanded the barricadoes to be maintained, and the moſt vigilant watch to be obſerved, in order to prevent the king's eſcape.

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He pacifies the populace.

Under circumſtances ſo diſtreſsful, that prince had recourſe to his uſual expedient of negociation. Catherine of Medicis, continuing to mediate, viſited the duke of Guiſe, and endeavoured to accommodate matters between them. The populace, maſters of the capital, would not even permit her to paſs through the intermediate ſtreets in her coach; and ſhe was reduced to the humiliating neceſſity of being carried in a chair, while the barricadoes, opened to admit her paſſage, were immediately cloſed behind her. Nor did ſhe find in Guiſe any diſpoſition to treat, except upon conditions too inſolent to be accepted even by Henry, in his preſent abject ſtate. No alternative, therefore, except flight, was left; and it might ſpeedily become impracticable, if the Louvre, preſſed in front, and deſtitute of proviſions to hold out againſt the beſiegers, ſhould be inveſted from behind, towards the country. After a night of irreſolution, and alarm, the king determined to quit his palace, and effect his eſcape; while the queen-mother returning a ſecond

Negociations of the queen dowager, with Guiſe.

CHAP. VII.

1588. Terror of Henry.

a ſecond time to the duke of Guiſe, attempted to mollify the terms demanded on the preceding day. Henry's departure was accelerated by the intelligence which he received, that meaſures were taken for ſurrounding him, and that eight thouſand men were already on their march to cut off his retreat, while an attack was to be made upon the palace by the Pariſians. Terrified at the proſpect of remaining a priſoner, he quitted the Louvre; and having mounted on horſeback, attended only by a few gentlemen, he took the road to Chartres, where he arrived on the following day. His courtiers, many of the magiſtrates, and the great officers of the crown, followed him in the utmoſt confuſion (6).

13th May. His flight from Paris.

Such was the ſingular deſtiny of Henry the Third; raiſed to the throne of Poland by election, and to that of France by deſcent; yet, compelled to fly from the capital of each with precipitation; and to quit Paris, as he had done Cracow, near fourteen

(6) De Thou, vol. x. p. 260---267. Davila, p. 691---698. Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 46.---49. Memoires de Chiverny, vol. i. p. 102---108. L'Etoile, Jour. p. 244---246. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 332---336. D'Aubig. Hiſt. Univ. vol. iii. p. 72---77.

Of all the contemporary hiſtorians, who have related the circumſtances attending the duke of Guiſe's arrival at Paris, the day of the barricadoes, and the flight of Henry; Davila is the moſt minute, moſt intereſting, and, perhaps, the moſt accurate. He recounts it from high authority, and with a perfect knowledge of the facts. De Thou contains, likewiſe, a number of very curious particulars. That great and virtuous magiſtrate was on the ſpot, an actor in, and a ſpectator of the ſcene. But, Davila ſeems to have known more of the ſecret ſprings, which actuated Henry's conduct.

Chiverny, who, from his high poſt of Chancellor, muſt have been acquainted with every tranſaction reſpecting it, is ſhort, and deſtitute of any valuable matter. He aſſerts, that when the king left Paris, his intention was only to have gone to St. Germain; but, reflecting, that he ſhould not be more in ſafety there, than in the capital itſelf, he reſolved on retiring to Chartres. It appears from L'Etoile, that he had not a moment to loſe; and that if he had delayed his flight for two hours longer, it would have become impracticable. We find by the "Chronologie Novennaire," that ſome ſoldiers, placed in the tower of Neſle, near the gate by which the king eſcaped, fired on him, and loaded him with the moſt abuſive language. He ſlept in his boots, at Rambouillet, after having ſtationed guards on every ſide, to prevent ſurprize or attack.

years

years earlier, under circumſtances of diſgrace, or of ignominy. His departure was not leſs unpleaſing to the duke of Guiſe, who received the information, while he was ſtill negociating with the queen-mother. Conſcious that he had, by his want of vigilance, allowed his prey to eſcape; and aware of all the conſequences which muſt enſue from ſo irreparable a fault, he exhibited marks of ſurprize, and even of conſternation. But, recovering from his firſt emotions, he prepared to avail himſelf of his victory over the crown. Paris was completely in his poſſeſſion, and he loſt not a moment in ſecuring ſo valuable a prize. Having cauſed the barricadoes to be removed, and reſtored univerſal tranquillity throughout the city; he ſummoned the governor of the Baſtile to ſurrender that fortreſs. Henry had refuſed to entruſt the defence of it to Ornano, one of his braveſt and moſt faithful officers, who had offered, on pain of loſing his head, to maintain it till the laſt extremity. The Baſtile was immediately delivered up; and two days afterwards, the caſtle of Vincennes followed the example. New municipal magiſtrates were elected in the place of thoſe who were attached to the king: Guiſe took poſſeſſion of the arſenal; ſubjected almoſt all the places which command the courſe of the river Seine, and Marne; and omitted no precaution to enſure the ſafety, and encreaſe the attachment of the Pariſians (7).

CHAP. VII. 1588.

Emotions of Guiſe on that event.

He becomes maſter of the Baſtile.

From the period of Henry's flight, the royal power may be ſaid to have ceaſed, and to have been, in a great meaſure, transferred to "the League." Driven from his capital; abandoned, and betrayed by his miniſters, who perceived his incurable ſupineneſs or incapacity: diveſted of the authority, and greatly diminiſhed even in the external ſplendor annexed to the throne: compelled not only to gra-

Diſſolution of the royal authority.

(7) De Thou, vol. x. p. 268—270. Davila, p. 699 and 700.

CHAP. VII. 1588.

tify his implacable enemies with every dignity and office; but, to complete his own humiliation by approving all their outrages: he continued merely to retain the title, without exercising the functions of a king. While Guise, elated with his success, addressed letters to the various cities of the kingdom, and to Henry himself, justifying the late transactions, and applauding their motives for taking up arms; that feeble prince scarcely ventured, in his manifesto to the nation, to express his resentment for the injuries which he sustained. Instead of assembling forces, and attempting to vindicate the insulted honor of his crown; he permitted Catherine of Medicis, who remained at Paris, to continue the negociations for peace. Insensible to the degraded situation in which he stood, he even prosecuted his accustomed pleasures, at the time that the adherents of his adversary rendered themselves masters of the most important cities of France. Epernon, who had been absent during the late insurrection, returning from his government of Normandy, met with a cold reception, and was ordered by Henry to retire to Angouleme. This step, whether the result of policy, or arising from his change of disposition, was followed by a treaty with Guise. The confirmation of all the various acts of rebellion and usurpation, committed by himself and his followers: the addition of new cities to those already ceded to "the League:" the post of commander in chief of the forces, with unlimited powers, conferred on the duke himself, besides the post of lord stewart of the household, which he previously enjoyed: the re-commencement of war with the Hugonots: the exclusion of heretics from the succession to the crown: and the convocation of the states general in the ensuing month of October, to ratify all the preceding concessions in the name of the nation;

Feeble measures of Henry.

Treaty concluded with Guise.

21st July.

tion: these were the principal articles of the agreement accepted by the king (8). CHAP. VII.

So humiliating an accommodation was followed by the arrival of Guise in person at Chartres, where Catherine of Medicis presented him to her son. Henry, notwithstanding all the recent insults received from him, exhibited every mark of forgiveness, and even of affection, towards a man whom he justly feared, and whose destruction, it is probable, that he had already determined. The stipulations of the late treaty were fulfilled, though not without manifest repugnance; and the duke was invested with his new commission, conceived in terms the most ample. In order to gratify the cardinal of Bourbon, he was declared, by a separate edict, to be the nearest prince of the royal blood; and as such, to be entitled to all the privileges or exemptions usually accorded to the person possessing that high rank. During the course of these interesting events, the kingdom was far from enjoying tranquillity. In Poitou, the king of Navarre, who, by the death of his cousin, the prince of Condé, was compelled to assume the command, retook the important post of Marans, which had fallen into the hands of the royalists: while Lesdiguieres having joined his forces with La Valette, brother to Epernon, who acted as lieutenant for the crown in Provence, became by the junction, superior to the troops of "the League." Epernon himself, besieged in the castle of Angouleme by the inhabitants of the city, was reduced to the last extremity of famine; and only extricated himself from the danger by the most determined courage (9).

1588.
4th August. Guise visits Henry at Chartres.

Commotions and military operations in the provinces.
July.

August 13.

August 10.

(8) De Thou, vol. x. p. 323—326. Davila, p. 700—713. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 725—729.

(9) De Thou, vol. x. p. 328—343, and 352—367. Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 230—273.

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1588.

But, all inferior intereſts or concerns were ſwallowed up in the conſideration of the important ſcene which was about to open at Blois. The duke of Guiſe, notwithſtanding his paſt ſucceſs, regarded the conceſſions of the king as equally incomplete and inſecure, till they were ſolemnly ratified by the aſſembly of the States; and he exerted, by himſelf and his emiſſaries, every endeavour to procure the election of delegates, favorable to his ambitious projects.

Projects of Guiſe,

and of Henry.

Henry, on the other hand, had conceived the vain, and chimerical hope of reſuming in that aſſembly, his antient authority. Having gratified the chiefs of "the League" by a compliance with all their demands, and by the pardon of their conduct in the inſurrection of Paris; he flattered himſelf that they would reſt ſatisfied with their acquiſitions. Rendered diſtruſtful by his experience of the infidelity of his miniſters, whom he ſuſpected of being either wholly devoted to the queen-mother, under whoſe protection they had riſen; or, of being ſecretly attached to the Guiſes; he made a complete change in the members of his cabinet. A new adminiſtration was formed, on whoſe adherence he believed that he could confide; and Chiverney, the chancellor, diſmiſſed from his employment, was ſucceeded by Montholon, to whom the ſeals were delivered.

Change of miniſters.

Convocation of the States General at Blois. October 16.

The convocation of the States, impatiently expected by both parties, was opened by the king in perſon; who harangued the three orders in the caſtle of Blois, expoſed to them, in animated colors, the calamities of the nation, and beſought of them to co-operate with him in applying inſtant, and adequate remedies. In order to give an inconteſtable proof of his ſincerity in the late treaty with the duke of Guiſe, and of his intention to execute it with fidelity, he ſwore to its obſervance; cauſed the edict to be received as a fundamental law of the ſtate, and the oath to be taken by every member of the

the assembly. He, nevertheless, soon perceived, that, instead of acquiring popularity by such a measure; he had only degraded the throne, and augmented the confidence of his enemies. All the deliberations of the States were directed by them, and served to convince him, that his expectations of assistance from the representatives of the nation, were delusive. The clergy, devoted to Guise, and peculiarly interested in the continuance of war with the Hugonots, considered him as their sole protector: while the delegates composing the third estate, oppressed by the severity of taxes, or corrupted by the money lavishly expended to purchase their suffrages; received his commands with implicit obedience. Among the nobles alone, Henry maintained a considerable degree of influence; but, the crown was too weak to support a contest with the other orders, or to render abortive the schemes of the powerful faction which preponderated in every resolution (10).

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Influence of Guise in the assembly.

November.

Political, as well as personal motives, combined in urging him to adopt some vigorous measures for his safety and extrication. The duke of Savoy, Charles Emanuel, a prince of an aspiring mind, and ambitious views, encouraged by the troubles of France; privately connected with the Guises; and availing himself of so favorable an occasion; had attacked and conquered the marquisate of Saluzzo, situated among the Alps, and the last remains of the French acquisitions in Piemont. Henry was deeply sensible to the injury; and such was the indignation of the States, that they proceeded instantly to declare war upon a prince, who had wantonly violated, without provocation, a long established peace. The three orders, instigated by the duke of Guise,

Capture of Saluzzo, by the duke of Savoy.

Demands of the States.

(10) Davila, p. 719—726. De Thou, vol. x. p. 368—397.

had

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had moreover, unanimouſly, and clamorouſly, demanded the royal aſſent to a reſolution, excluding the king of Navarre from his right of ſucceſſion; and though Henry had been able to delay an immediate compliance with their requeſt, yet, it was evident that he muſt eventually ſanction the decree. From every quarter he received information of the duke's treaſonable deſigns, which had for their avowed objects, his impriſonment, and conſequent depoſition. Marſhal d'Aumont, one of the few perſons ſincerely attached to his honor and intereſts, had warned him, that not a moment was to be loſt, as the States were already diſpoſed to inſiſt on the nomination of the duke to the office of conſtable of France; the powers annexed to which would render him equally independant of, and formidable to, the crown.

Motives to impel the king to adopt vigorous reſolutions.

As if theſe public inducements were not ſufficiently powerful to propel the indolence of the king, private inſults and mortifications the moſt humiliating, were added. Henry having deſired to except the city of Orleans from the number of places ceded by him to "the League," his wiſh was not only refuſed; but, menaces were thrown out, if he ſhould preſume to inſiſt on the propoſition. The ducheſs of Montpenſier publickly ſhewed the golden ſciſſars which ſhe wore at her girdle; and owned, that they were deſtined to give the tonſure to a king, whom ſhe pronounced unworthy longer to wear the crown. Even from the adherents of the family of Guiſe, and, as it was generally believed, from the duke of Mayenne himſelf, whoſe moderate temper rendered him averſe to his brother's ambitious views; Henry had received advice, that a deſperate meaſure was on the point of being taken againſt his dignity and liberty, if not againſt his life (11).

(11) Davila, p. 726—739. De Thou, vol. x. p. 422—449. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. p. 95—103.

Rouſed

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Roused by so many concurring testimonies, that irresolute prince, driven beyond the bounds of patience, and compelled to have recourse to the most violent remedies, in order to preserve the remains of his authority; determined on immediate vengeance. Unable to arrest so powerful a criminal, or to condemn him by the customary forms of justice, he was necessitated to recur to assassination; and having embraced the resolution, it was not difficult to find instruments for the purpose. His terrors of "the League" had induced him to form a body guard, composed principally of Gascon gentlemen, chosen by Epernon; poor, faithful, and capable of any enterprize. They were forty-five in number, and commanded by Lognac, whose devotion was unquestionable. Having selected from among them, nine, of whose intrepidity he had the highest opinion, Henry distributed the poniards destined for the act, with his own hand; stationed them in the apartment adjoining to his cabinet; and recommended to them his honor and his crown.

Henry determines on causing Guise to be put to death.

He selects the instruments of his vengeance.

Notwithstanding the precautions taken to conceal the design, indirect and ambiguous notifications of it were transmitted to the duke of Guise, from various quarters. But, naturally incapable of fear, and audacious, even to temerity: too far advanced, either to retreat, or to fly, without sacrificing his projects and his adherents: relying on the timidity or indecision of Henry, whom he despised; and dissuaded by the archbishop of Lyons, one of his most confidential friends, from abandoning his plans at the moment of their completion; he disregarded all admonitions. The king having commanded his attendance alone, in order, as he pretended, to consult him on some affairs of a private nature; the duke, unaccompanied by his ordinary attendants, quitted the chamber in which the council was assembled. At the instant, when he entered the adjoining

Audacity of Guise.

CHAP. VII.

1588. His assassination. 23d Dec.

joining apartment, and while he was in the act of lifting up the tapestry which covered the door of the cabinet where Henry stood; the gentlemen, appointed to assassinate him, attacked him on every side. Overpowered by numbers, and incapable of making a long defence, he soon fell, and expired almost without uttering a single word (12).

Character.

Such was the fatal end of a man, who, in other times, and conducted by other principles, might have been equally the support, and the ornament of the throne. Nature had lavished on him many of the rarest and greatest endowments; peculiarly those

(12) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 103—109. L'Etoile, p. 257—259. De Thou, vol. x. p. 460—470, and p. 480. Davila, p. 741—747. Chiverny, vol. i. p. 121—123.

Every particular of this interesting catastrophé is to be found in Davila, L'Etoile, De Thou, and the "Chronologie Novennaire." They, in general, agree with each other, in the leading facts. It cannot be questioned, that the duke of Guise received repeated information of Henry's intention to assassinate him; nor does it seem that he altogether disbelieved or despised the admonitions: but, he could no longer retreat, without disgrace and ruin. L'Etoile says, that he received no less than nine billets on the morning of his death, to warn him of his fate; and, that he disregarded them all. He adds, that after his assassination, Henry, coming out of his closet, and regarding the dead body of his enemy, kicked it on the face; exclaiming, "Mon Dieu! qu'il est grand! Il paroît encore plus grand, mort, que "vivant." But, Davila, far better informed, expressly says, that "the "king, content with knowing that the duke was dead, would not even look "upon the corpse;" and, de Thou confirms it, by declaring, that, "so "soon as Guise's death was announced, Henry ordered the carpet upon "which he fell, to be laid over him, and came out of his closet." This conduct is much more analogous to the general character of the king, who was not cruel, nor vindictive. The last necessity alone had impelled him to anticipate the intentions of his enemies, which were levelled against his crown and liberty.

If it be true, as d'Aubigné asserts, that the door which communicated from the chamber in which Guise was killed, to the king's closet, was walled up, in order to prevent the possibility of his entering it; no circumstance can convey a stronger idea of the terror, inspired by him into Henry. The bodies of the duke, and of the cardinal his brother, were let down by ropes from the castle, on the night of the 24th of December, into the court yard; and there consumed by quick-lime, in order to prevent any relics of them from being preserved. By the seizure of Pelicart, secretary to the duke of Guise, and from the papers and letters in his possession, it was clearly proved, that a treasonable correspondence was carried on between Guise and Philip the Second, the king of Spain. The sums, asserted to have been remitted from Philip, during the ten years preceding 1588, did not fall short of two hundred thousand pounds sterling, as De Thou positively declares.

which

which are calculated to obtain, and to preſerve an empire over mankind. In generoſity, affability, and inſinuation, he exceeded any of his contemporaries. His manners were popular and gracious; yet, dignified and elevated. Profuſe of promiſes, of careſſes, and of money, he acquired adherents in every claſs of ſociety. His talents for war had been fully diſplayed; and his ſucceſs in the late campaign againſt the Germans, by raiſing him to the pinnacle of public favor, prepared the way to his ruin. Patient of hunger, thirſt, and every hardſhip, he was not leſs idolized by the ſoldiery, than by the people; and his incredible activity enabled him, without effort, or fatigue, to be preſent at, and perſonally to direct, every operation of the field, or of the cabinet. So many ſublime qualities were, notwithſtanding, obſcured by an inſatiable ambition, and ſullied by a diſregard to his promiſes, and a contempt of faith in all his tranſactions. CHAP. VII. 1588.

At the ſame inſtant when the duke of Guiſe was aſſaſſinated, his brother, the cardinal, together with the archbiſhop of Lyons, were arreſted in the council chamber. Henry, neither ſanguinary, nor vindictive from natural character, was inclined to have ſpared the cardinal: but, the exhortations of thoſe who ſurrounded him; the violent and implacable enmity, expreſſed by that prelate; and the menaces which even his preſent ſituation could not induce him to refrain from uttering; prevailed on the king to give orders for his execution. Four ſoldiers, to whom the charge was committed, diſpatched him with their halberts: he met his fate with undaunted intrepidity. Satisfied with having ſacrificed the two brothers, Henry did not ſhed any other blood; and he inſtantly granted the life of the archbiſhop of Lyons, to the entreaties of his nephew. The ducheſs of Nemours, mother to the duke and cardinal of Guiſe; the young prince of Joinville, ſon to the

Arreſt of the cardinal of Guiſe.

His death.

24th Dec.

Impriſonment of various perſons.

CHAP. VII. 1588.

the duke; together with the cardinal of Bourbon, who had been so long the instrument of "the "League;" and the duke of Elbeuf, another prince of the family of Lorrain, were committed to the castle of Amboise. Many of the inferior agents, or adherents of the Guises, were, likewise, seized; but, the injudicious, and ill-timed lenity of the king, soon restored them to freedom; and they abused it, by immediately proceeding to every act of violence against the crown. The duke of Mayenne, absent at Lyons, having received intelligence of the death of his brothers; and apprized, that if he lost a moment, he would be likewise arrested; precipitately left the city, and fled to Dijon, the capital of his government of Burgundy (13).

(13) Davila, p. 747—755. De Thou, vol. x. p. 471—479. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 151—154.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Inactivity of the king, after the death of the Guiſes.—Emotions excited by that event, at Paris.—Death of Catherine of Medicis—Rebellion—Violent acts committed by the Pariſians.—Duke of Mayenne conſtituted chief of the League.—Revolt of the principal cities of France.—Deſperate ſituation of Henry.—Conduct of the king of Navarre.—Truce between him and Henry.—Excommunication of the king.—Interview of Pleſſiz les Tours.—Attack of Tours, by Mayenne.—Operations of the war.—Vigorous exertions of the king.—He marches to Paris.—Critical poſition of the affairs of the League.—Aſſaſſination of Henry.—His death.—Character.—General Reflexions.

CHAP. VIII. 1589.

THE conſternation, excited by the death of the Guiſes, not only at Blois, but, throughout the kingdom, was ſuch, that if Henry had availed himſelf without delay, and had acted with vigor, it is probable that no fatal conſequences might have reſulted, either to himſelf, or to his ſubjects. Notwithſtanding the contempt into which his perſon and authority were fallen, the ſpirit of loyalty and obedience was not entirely extinct. The capital, and the provinces, were alike ſuſpended, on receiving the intelligence, and waited in expectation of the events, by which ſo unexpected a blow would probably be followed. Orleans might have been ſaved by promptitude and diſpatch; marſhal d'Aumont having found means to enter the caſtle, which held out for the crown againſt the inhabitants of the city. In Poitou, the duke of Nevers commanded a conſiderable army againſt the proteſtants, and could have been recalled without

Eſcape of Mayenne. Conſternation, excited by the late events.

CHAP. VIII. 1589. without difficulty. Sancy, who had recently been embaſſador to the Swiſs cantons, urged the neceſſity of a levy of troops from that country, and offered to conduct them in perſon; nor was it poſſible for the adherents of "the League," unprepared, and ſcattered over the kingdom, to act with energy againſt their ſovereign, when at the head of a formidable army, and followed by a numerous nobility.

Inaction of Henry.

But, all theſe advantages were rendered unavailing, by the inactivity and ſupineneſs of Henry. The emotions of reſentment, which had excited him to revenge the inſults offered to his dignity, having ſubſided, he relapſed into his former apathy and ſecurity. He had taken no meaſures for ſupporting the late violent act of ſeverity; and he flattered himſelf, that the projects of the duke of Guiſe would be extinguiſhed by his death. Inſtead of putting himſelf inſtantly on horſeback, and marching his forces againſt Orleans and Paris, he appeared to be inſenſible to the ſituation of thoſe cities; and he dreaded more the Papal excommunication for the murder of the cardinal of Guiſe, than the indignation of the people of France. His firſt attention was directed to deprecate the anger of the holy ſee; and after uſing every effort to mollify the legate, he diſpatched the biſhop of Mans, as his embaſſador to Rome, in order to appeaſe the cenſures with which he was menaced from Sixtus the Fifth (1).

1589. Pernicious effects reſulting from it.

A conduct ſo indolent and puſillanimous, was attended with the worſt effects. The caſtle of Orleans, deſtitute of the neceſſary garriſon, ſurrendered to the beſiegers; and that important city, ſituated on the Loire, in the center of the kingdom, was loſt by Henry's neglect. The royal army under the

(1) Davila, p. 777. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 483—485.

duke

duke of Nevers, infected with the general ſpirit of ſedition and revolt, diſbanded, and joined the enemy: while, the duke of Mayenne, who ſeemed irreſolute and uncertain of the part which he ſhould act, encouraged by the king's inaction, determined to revenge the death of his brothers. But, it was in the capital, that the moſt alarming events took place, on the arrival of the intelligence that the popular leaders had been aſſaſſinated. Apprehenſive that their execution was only a prelude to greater diſplays of authority, and that Henry would ſoon appear in perſon to reſume his prerogatives, and to puniſh the rebels who had inſulted his lenity; the people betrayed ſcarcely any other emotions, except thoſe of grief. Even the clergy, who had manifeſted the warmeſt devotion to the houſe of Guiſe, reſtrained their ſorrow, or contented themſelves with deploring the tragical end of two princes, ſo illuſtrious for their public ſervices and virtues. The parliament of Paris, compoſed of perſons, venerable from their age, character and judicial functions; was not inclined to adopt ſentiments of a nature hoſtile to the repoſe of their country. Among the opulent claſſes of citizens in the metropolis, there was every diſpoſition to aid and ſupport the crown, if they had in turn, received from it, the natural and juſt protection. But, when, inſtead of hearing that Henry was on his march to reſtore order, they learned that he remained at Blois in a ſtate of indolent repoſe; and when they beheld the example of Orleans, which ventured to reſiſt with impunity, they gave full ſcope to their rage and violence. Having aſſembled tumultuouſly in the town-hall, they conferred the government of Paris on the duke of Aumale; came to a determination of ſending immediate ſuccours to the inhabitants of Orleans; and put the city into a ſtate of defence. The fermentation was

CHAP. VIII. 1589.

Emotions of the Pariſians, on the duke of Guiſe's death.

Fermentation and revolt in the capital.

CHAP. VIII. 1589.

was sustained by the popular preachers, who, enraged at the murder of the cardinal of Guise, confounded his punishment with the interests of the Catholic religion, of which they declared him the martyr; and branded their sovereign with the most opprobrious epithets (2).

Death of Catherine of Medicis.

5th Jan.

While these symptoms of rebellion displayed themselves in Paris, an event took place at Blois, which, however lost in the turbulent and calamitous scenes presented on every side, at this period of Henry's reign, must forcibly attract the notice of the historian. Catherine of Medicis, at seventy years of age, during the last thirty of which she had directed, in a greater, or lesser degree, the affairs of France, expired, after an illness of a few days. At the time of the duke of Guise's assassination, she was indisposed with the gout; and her emotions on receiving information of an event, to which she might be said, in some measure, to have contributed by the protection of the Guises, accelerated the progress of her disorder. Her judgment, ripened by experience, enabled her to see, and to apprize the king, who, with marks of exultation, informed her of the duke's death, that only vigor and expedition could extricate him from the commotions, with which it must necessarily be followed. Her malady redoubled, in consequence of the severe reproaches made her by the cardinal of Bourbon, on her supposed participation in the violent measures adopted by her son; and the agitations of her mind aiding the attacks of disease, she survived only a short time. Few women have possessed a more exalted capacity, or have acted so distinguished a part on the theatre of the world. The strength of her genius, and the acuteness of her talents, enabled her to acquire, and to retain an

Character of that princess.

(2) De Thou, vol. x. p. 485—490. Davila, p. 760—762.

ascendant

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aſcendant over her two ſons, Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, after their confidence in her was totally extinct. Of a maſculine ambition, ſhe deſpiſed the ordinary occupations and amuſements of her ſex, and was only intent upon more ſolid objects. Magnificent, liberal, affable, and capable of the cloſeſt application, ſhe was never overcome by the magnitude, nor diſtracted by the multiplicity of public affairs. Prodigal of human blood; faithleſs to her engagements; and regardleſs of the means by which ſhe attained her ends; ſhe was deſtitute of principles of virtue. Continually employed in exciting the diſſentions of the kingdom, in order to render her interference neceſſary for their ſuppreſſion; ſhe maintained her influence, at the expence of the national tranquillity and felicity. Mortified to behold her authority in a great meaſure ſubverted, by the favor to which Joyeuſe and Epernon had attained; ſhe had recourſe to the Guiſes, in order to balance and preponderate the credit of Henry's minions. With that view, ſhe facilitated, or ſupported the meaſures of "the "League:" but, her ability was unequal to extinguiſh the conflagration which ſhe had kindled; and ſhe ſaw before her death the fatal effects of her inordinate thirſt of power. Oppreſſed at once by age and diſeaſe; reproached by thoſe whom ſhe had unintentionally precipitated on ruin; and no longer truſted by Henry himſelf; having outlived her influence, and involved her ſon, as well as the monarchy of France, in almoſt inextricable calamities; ſhe might be eſteemed fortunate in not ſurviving to witneſs the complete extinction of the houſe of Valois, and the transfer of the crown to the family of Bourbon, which ſhe had always hated and perſecuted (3).

Support given by her to the League.

(3) Davila, p. 755—757. De Thou, vol. x. p. 500—503. L'Etoile, p. 261—263. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 124—133.

The

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1589. The king performed her funeral with all the solemnity and magnificence, which the distressed situation of his affairs and finances would permit.

Dismission of the States General. Inattentive to, and unaffected by the distracted condition of the kingdom, he continued at Blois, occupied in closing and finally dismissing the States.

16th Jan. He executed it with the same tranquillity and complacency, which he would have exhibited in a time of profound repose; although every hour convinced him of the necessity of exerting his utmost efforts, to prevent the destruction impending over his crown and life. Previous to the dissolution of the assembly, he administered anew the oath, by which he bound himself never to tolerate any religion, except the Catholic; but, this proof of his zeal, only served to manifest his weakness, and to encourage his enemies. Mendoza, the Spanish embassador, had already taken his departure, and had repaired to Paris, in which city was concentered all

Insurrection at Paris. the violence of "the League." Encouraged by Henry's feeble and dilatory proceedings, the inhabitants no longer observed any measures of respect towards him; and the spirit of revolt pervading all the classes of society, the remaining barriers which opposed their progress, were totally overthrown.

Decree of the college of the Sorbonne. The college of the Sorbonne, whose decrees in theology were regarded in that age as sacred, when consulted by the people, in the names of the municipal magistrates; solemnly determined, that the nation was freed from the oath of fidelity; and that arms might conscientiously be taken up against Henry, for the defence of religion. Such was the blind and furious attachment of the multitude to the duke and cardinal of Guise, that they saw in those princes only their devotion to the Catholic faith, and were insensible to the acts of treason and rebellion, by which they had merited and provoked their fate. From similar perversion of mind, a prince,

prince, whose principal crime consisted in his insurmountable indolence, and who had with difficulty been roused to a single act of vengeance, necessary for his own preservation; was stigmatized by his subjects, with the imputation of a sanguinary tyrant, delighting in the effusion of human blood. CHAP. VIII. 1589.

Powerful as the decree of the Sorbonne had been, in exciting the populace to throw off subjection to the government, it would have been ineffectual to produce their complete emancipation from all restraint, while the parliament of Paris continued to exercise its functions, and to retain its authority. It became, therefore, requisite to dissolve an assembly, whose presence and deliberations tended to keep alive a sense of duty and loyalty. Bussy le Clerc, a man whose audacity fitted him for the commission, undertook to arrest, and to conduct the refractory members to prison. Having surrounded the hall in which the parliament was met, and occupied all the avenues with his adherents; he entered, armed, into the great chamber, at the precise time when they were about to nominate deputies to wait upon the king at Blois. He instantly began to read the list of the obnoxious and proscribed members, among whom were the two presidents; when he was interrupted by the unanimous voice of the whole body, who declared their determination to follow their chiefs. They were conducted through the streets of the capital, accompanied by the lamentations and tears of the virtuous, or moderate part of the citizens; and were lodged in the Bastile. A new parliament, composed of individuals more subservient, was speedily constituted by the insurgents; who proceeded to administer a solemn oath, in the name of the princes, cities, and states of France, binding them to maintain the union, and to pursue the vengeance of the late assassinations. To inflame the passions of the peo-

Seizure, and imprisonment of the parliament.

16th Jan.

They are conducted to the Bastile.

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ple, a ſpectacle calculated to awaken their pity, was likewiſe exhibited; that of the ducheſs of Guiſe, widow of the late duke, who, dreſſed in the deepeſt mourning, and accompanied by a train of weeping friends or relatives, preſented at the bar of the parliament, a petition, praying for redreſs againſt the authors of her huſband's death (4).

31ſt Jan.

Indeciſion of the duke of Mayenne.

Theſe important changes preceded the arrival of the duke of Mayenne, who remained, during a conſiderable time after his flight to Dijon, in a ſtate of indeciſion as to his future conduct. The natural moderation of his temper, added to the diſapprobation which he had felt, and expreſſed, at his brother's ambitious and criminal attempts, inclined him to liſten to the amicable propoſitions made him by Henry. But, the exhortations of his ſiſter, the ducheſs of Montpenſier; the invitation of the Pariſians; the ſucceſsful revolt of the city of Orleans; and the defenceleſs inactivity in which the king remained, at the moment which was to decide upon his greateſt intereſts: theſe conſiderations ſurmounted the reluctance of Mayenne. Quitting Burgundy, he repaired therefore, to Orleans; was received into the city of Chartres, which declared for "the League;" and, after confirming the adherents of his partizans, he arrived in the metropolis, amidſt the acclamations of the inhabitants.

His arrival at Paris.

15th Feb.

His preſence diffuſed univerſal joy, and was followed by events which gave the laſt blow to the expiring influence or authority of the crown. The duke immediately conſtituted a council of the Union, compoſed of forty members, ſelected from among the clergy, nobility, magiſtrates, and citizens, for the ſupreme adminiſtration of all affairs;

18th Feb.

(4) De Thou, vol. x. p. 511—520. Davila, p. 76—765. L'Etoile, p. 264—271. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 117—121. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 364—367.

the separate jurisdiction of Paris being still vested in the council of sixteen. Obedience to them was enjoined on pain of death; and from their hands, he soon afterwards received the investiture of his new office, denominated "Lieutenant-general of the "Royal State and Crown of France." Its duration was limited to the convocation of the States General, at Paris, in the following month of July; and the functions, annexed to it, were precisely those naturally and legitimately vested in the sovereign, whose person he was designed to represent. The duke swore, at the ceremony of his induction, to maintain inviolate the purity of the Catholic faith, the privileges of the nobility and clergy, and the laws of the kingdom. He likewise promised, in order to attach the people, a diminution of the taxes, and protection from all violence or oppression. This public act by which Henry was virtually deposed, aided by the inflammatory discourses of the Monks and preachers, carried the outrages of the Parisians to the last extremity. The populace, animated to a degree of phrenzy, listened with implicit credulity to all the absurd and monstrous fictions, invented to defame and traduce the king. In addition to the crimes of perfidy and assassination, were added the accusations of magic, impiety, and every profanation. He was no longer known by any denomination except that of Henry of Valois; and it was solemnly proposed, after his deposition from the royal dignity, to imprison him during the remainder of his life in the convent of the Hiéronimites, in the wood of Vincennes, there to expiate his past offences by penitence and prayer (5).

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4th March. He is constituted lieutenant-general of the crown.

Fury of the Parisians.

The powerful example of the metropolis, operated with incredible force upon the other cities of the kingdom; and the greater number of them

Revolt of the kingdom.

(5) De Thou, vol. x. p. 523—529. Davila. p. 771—775.

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openly embraced the party of the duke of Mayenne. From the northern frontier of Picardy, to the gates of Marſeilles, and the ſhore of the Mediterranean, ſcarcely a place of ſtrength, or importance remained firm in its allegiance to the crown. Amiens, and Abbeville, which, as well from their magnitude, as from their poſition on the river Somme, were of the firſt conſequence, joined "the League." Laon imitated their conduct; and Melun, the only town in the vicinity of Paris, which had refuſed to ſubmit, was loſt for want of aſſiſtance. Rouen, together with the whole of Upper Normandy, expelled the royal troops, and governors. The contagion ſpread with irreſiſtible rapidity. Chalons on the Marne, was the only city of Champagne, which adhered to Henry; and Burgundy was completely in the intereſts of the duke of Mayenne. Even the important and commercial city of Lyons could not be retained in its duty, by the exertions of Ornano; and Provence exhibited ſimilar proofs of diſaffection. The inhabitants of Toulouſe, after maſſacring, with circumſtances of uncommon ferocity, their firſt magiſtrates, renounced ſubjection to the king; and Narbonne followed the example. In the central and interior provinces, the defection was not leſs general. La Chatre, governor of Berri, induced the city of Bourges to revolt; and Mans was loſt, by the perfidy of Bois-Dauphin, one of the chiefs arreſted by Henry after the aſſaſſination of the duke of Guiſe, and whom he had afterwards imprudently releaſed upon his parole. Clermont alone, of all the cities in Auvergne, refuſed to throw off its allegiance. But, the defection of the duke of Mercœur more deeply affected the king, as in addition to the government of Brittany, he ſtood in the neareſt degree of connexion to the crown, by Henry's marriage with his ſiſter, Louiſa of Vaudemont. Among ſo many calamities, and amidſt ſo univerſal a revolt,

Rouen.

Lyons.

Toulouſe.

Brittany.

a revolt, Matignon retained Bourdeaux in its obedience, though not without difficulty. In Guienue, Languedoc, and Dauphiné, from the numbers and predominance of the Hugonots, "the League" had little power, and few adherents. The courſe of the Loire from the gates of Orleans, to thoſe of Nantes, and the paſſages of that important river, were, likewiſe, principally occupied by the royaliſts; and Henry was ſtill nominally obeyed in Tours, Saumur, and Angers (6). 1589.

Conduct of Sixtus the Fifth, towards the king.

Nor was the ſituation of that prince's affairs in the court of Rome, more favorable than the internal aſpect of France. Sixtus the Fifth, naturally arrogant and iraſcible; inclined to profit of the anarchy of the kingdom, in order to extend the power and pretenſions of the Holy See; and warmly ſolicited by the Spaniſh faction, who ſupported the duke of Mayenne; pertinaciouſly refuſed to grant the king abſolution for the aſſaſſinations, committed by his orders. It was in vain, that he attempted by ſubmiſſions and proteſtations of devotion, to mollify the pontiff; who demanded, previous to his forgiveneſs, that the cardinal of Bourbon, and the archbiſhop of Lyons ſhould be ſet at liberty, and even transferred before the Papal tribunal at Rome. Sixtus, far from relaxing in his requiſitions, menaced the king with excommunication, and appeared to have embraced with ardor the intereſts of his enemies; nor could the interceſſion of the embaſſadors of Venice and Tuſcany prevail on him to adopt a conduct, more becoming the common father of the Chriſtian world (7).

Deplorable condition of Henry.

Oppreſſed by foreign, and domeſtic calamities, the king's ſituation became every day more critical and

(6) De Thou, vol. x. p. 551—575. Davila, p. 765—768. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 139—148.

(7) Davila, p. 770—772. De Thou, vol. x. p. 530—550.

deſperate.

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desperate. "The League" was in possession of almost all his dominions; while the Hugonots, relieved from the pressure of the royal forces under the duke of Nevers, advanced rapidly towards the Loire, and threatened to enclose him between two hostile armies. The exchequer was empty; the finances drained, or alienated; and he possessed no resources to supply the deficiency. His troops were neither numerous, nor could he rely on their attachment, in a moment of general desertion. The few places which still adhered to him, were shaken, and ready to revolt. Even his governors and commanders, whom he most trusted, opened their gates to the enemy, or compelled him to purchase their precarious fidelity, by presents and rewards. Spain and Savoy were unquestionably hostile; and he dreaded to ask, or to receive assistance from Elizabeth, queen of England, the protectress of heresy. Mayenne, master of the capital, and at the head of a formidable military force, prepared to commence active war; nor could the contest be either long, or dubious. It was already agitated in his council, to quit Blois, and to transport the court to Moulins, capital of the Bourbonnois. The condition of Charles the Seventh was not more deplorable, when the maid of Orleans appeared, and re-established the monarchy of France.

Edict issued by him.

Under these circumstances, the king, at length, issued an edict, in which, after justifying the late acts of severity against the Guises, as equally necessary and provoked, he commanded the rebels to return to their duty, on pain of treason. In order to give some efficacy to the proclamation, he published a second edict, transferring the parliament of Paris to

5th March.

Tours; in which latter city he fixed his residence, as more secure from insult than Blois. His presence prevented the inhabitants from following the general example; and Angers, which had already taken up arms against him, was kept in subjection by the firmness

firmneſs of Picheri, who commanded in the caſtle. Henry, having, on payment of a conſiderable ſum, obtained from le Guaſt, the governor of Amboiſe, the delivery of the priſoners confided to his care, removed them to different priſons. The cardinal of Bourbon was confined at Chinon: the duke of Elbeuf was transferred to Loches; and the young duke of Guiſe was detained in the caſtle of Tours (8).

1589. Transfer of the priſoners from Amboiſe.

Notwithſtanding theſe exertions of vigor, aided by ſome advantages which the count of Soiſſons obtained over the troops of "the League," no ſolid hopes of ſucceſs could be entertained, unleſs an accommodation took place with the king of Navarre. That event began already to be regarded as probable, if not imminent; and neceſſity dictated the meaſure. The count of Soiſſons, whoſe deſcent from the blood royal, rendered him deeply intereſted in effecting the reconciliation, and whoſe attachment to the Catholic religion was unqueſtionable; urged its expediency. Even the moſt bigotted ſervants of Henry, conſcious of the danger which approached, and aware of Mayenne's ſuperiority; admitted, that no other mode of extrication could be deviſed. The conduct of the king of Navarre himſelf, above all, tended to facilitate a re-union. As his troops advanced through Poitou, and made themſelves ſucceſſively maſters of various places which ſurrendered, he prevented any inſult, or injury, from being offered to the Catholics; reſpected their civil and eccleſiaſtical rights; and only reſtored to the Proteſtants the freedom of religious worſhip, previouſly enjoyed by the edicts of toleration which Henry had repeatedly iſſued. In addition to ſo beneficent and moderate a treatment of his enemies, he publiſhed a manifeſto, dated at Chatelheraud in Poitou, calcu-

Neceſſity of an accommodation with the king of Navarre.

Enlarged policy, and conduct of that prince.

4th March.

His manifeſto.

(8) De Thou, vol. x. p. 575—583. Davila, p. 787 and 788.

lated

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lated to awaken the loyalty, while it conciliated the eſteem and affection of every man, who retained any ſentiments of patriotiſm, or public virtue. After deploring the calamities of their common country, and reprobating the traitors, who, under the maſk of religion, had thrown off all ſubjection to their ſovereign; he declared perpetual war and irreconcilable enmity with the adherents of the League. He concluded by beſeeching of Henry to receive him again into favor; and proteſted in terms the moſt ſolemn, that whatever places ſhould ſubmit themſelves either to the king, or to himſelf, he would maintain the inhabitants in the undiſturbed enjoyment of all their privileges; peculiarly, in liberty of conſcience (9).

Negotiation between the two kings.

So many concurring inducements, at length, overcame the king's repugnance; and he conſented to open a negotiation. It was facilitated, and accelerated by the interpoſition of Diana, counteſs of Angouleme, natural daughter of Henry the Second. The conditions were ſpeedily adjuſted; the king of Navarre demanding only a place on the Loire, for the ſecurity of his retreat; and conſenting to join the royal army with his own forces, amounting to two thouſand foot, and twelve hundred cavalry. On theſe ſtipulations, a truce was concluded for one year, between the two princes; and after ſome delays, Saumur, one of the moſt eligible and commodious paſſages on the Loire, was ceded to the king of Navarre. Yet, at the moment of ſigning a treaty ſo advantageous to himſelf, Henry, actuated by his terrors of the Papal indignation, by his deteſtation of the Hugonots, and by his anxiety to obtain peace, on any conditions; commenced a negotiation with Mayenne. He even authorized the legate to offer the duke terms the moſt ſatisfactory, to-

3d April.

Treaty concluded.

Treatment of Henry, by Mayenne.

(9) De Thou, vol. x. p. 584—588. Davila, p. 785. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 159—165.

gether

gether with ample gratifications for all the princes of Lorrain, and the heads of the League. But, Mayenne, elated with the flattering aſpect of his affairs; and ſecure of the protection of Rome; rejected with diſdain, all propoſals of accommodation. He accompanied the refuſal, with expreſſions of contempt and averſion for Henry, whom he no longer treated, or affected to regard as king of France. Irritated at ſo inſulting a treatment, and conſcious that no hopes were to be entertained of reconciliation with his enemies; Henry conſented to the publication of the truce between him and the king of Navarre. It had been preceded by a ſimilar ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities, between Ornano, and Leſdiguieres, in Dauphiné, as chiefs of the Catholic and Hugonot armies (10).

1589.

Truce.

The intelligence of a treaty with the Proteſtants, and the conſequent reconciliation between the kings of France and Navarre, when it became known at Paris, carried the rage of its inhabitants to the utmoſt height. Libels, calumnies, and every kind of outrage, were circulated, or permitted, by which a furious and misguided populace could expreſs their impotent reſentment: while the ducheſs of Montpenſier ſuſtained their courage, by falſe, or exaggerated accounts of pretended victories over the royal forces. But, Henry was far leſs ſenſible to theſe demonſtrations of the enmity of his own ſubjects, than to the effects of the Papal cenſures. Sixtus, convinced that the affairs of the crown were deſperate; incenſed at the king's refuſal to liberate the two priſoners, for whoſe freedom he had ſolicited; and yielding to the importunities of Mayenne's agents; iſſued a monitory, enjoining Henry to ſet at liberty, in ten days, the cardinal of Bour-

Violence of the Pariſians.

Monitory, iſſued by Sixtus. 24th May.

(10) De Thou, vol. x. p. 589—593. Davila, p. 786—790. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 379—381. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 174—181.

bon,

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bon, and the archbiſhop of Lyons. On failure of obedience, the pope declared him excommunicated, as well as all his adherents; and cited him to appear in perſon, or by his repreſentative, before the tribunal of the Holy See, within the ſpace of two months. The Italian powers, particularly Ferdinand, great duke of Tuſcany, and the republic of Venice, were deeply ſenſible to ſo inſolent a diſplay of the pontifical authority; and warmly exhorted the king to reſent and puniſh the affront. Ferdinand, in addition to this generous and high-ſpirited advice, aſſiſted him with a very conſiderable loan, which enabled him to make new exertions, and to ſet on foot levies, within, and without his dominions. On the contrary, Sixtus, content with having anathematized him at the ſuggeſtion of the League, refuſed to open the treaſury of St. Peter, or to aid Mayenne with the ſmalleſt pecuniary contribution (11).

Interview of Pleſſiz les Tours.

The perſonal interview between the two monarchs, which had been too long delayed by the ſcruples, or apprehenſions of Henry, took place at length, in the park of the caſtle of Pleſſiz, near the city of Tours, amidſt an incredible aſſemblage of people, who rent the air with acclamations. The king of Navarre, after rejecting the cautious and timid advice of thoſe, who oppoſed his truſting to the honor of Henry, quitted his army, and advanced to throw himſelf at his ſovereign's feet. He was received by that prince, as he merited, with demonſtrations of extraordinary regard and affection. They embraced, exhibited marks of the moſt cordial reconciliation, and proceeded to concert meaſures for the vigorous proſecution of the war.

30th April. The king of Navarre completed his firſt impreſſion,

(11) Davila, p. 810 and 811. De Thou, vol. x. p. 594—600, and 603—614.

by

by returning, accompanied only with a ſingle page, on the following morning, in order to prove his unbounded confidence in Henry's good faith and ſincerity (12). CHAP. VIII. 1589.

Roused from his habitual indolence, by ſo many incentives to action, the king diſpatched Sancy to levy ten thouſand infantry among the Swiſs Cantons; and Schomberg, on a ſimilar commiſſion, into the empire, to raiſe a body of German cavalry. The war had already been commenced in Normandy, where the duke of Montpenſier, at the head of the royal forces, obtained a deciſive victory over the Gautiers; a community of peaſants, who having been driven by oppreſſion, to take up arms, had been ſeduced to join the party of the League. Surrounded, and repeatedly attacked, they were either put to the ſword, or compelled to ſurrender at diſcretion. A prodigious carnage was made among them; and the ſurvivors gladly accepted their lives, on condition of returning to their original occupation. An event ſo fortunate, at the commencement of hoſtilities, inſpired the royaliſts with courage; and Henry's army was augmented by the arrival of the duke of Epernon, who, at this critical period, brought him a ſupply of twelve hundred troops from Guienne. The king of Navarre, having returned to his camp, was, likewiſe, on his way towards Tours, at the head of the Hugonot forces; and it was already in agitation to advance towards the capital of France (13).

Exertions of Henry.

Defeat of the Gautiers.

22d April.

During the progreſs of theſe events, the duke of Mayenne, with a numerous and well-appointed army, having quitted Paris, marched to Vendome; the governor of which city, by an act of the baſeſt

8th April. Military operations of Mayenne.

(12) De Thou, vol. x. p. 618—622. Davila, p. 800. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 185 and 186.

(13) Davila, p. 794—799. De Thou, vol. x. p. 600—603. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 182 and 183.

treachery,

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treachery, received him immediately into the place. The archbiſhop of Lyons, who was confined in the caſtle of Amboiſe, found means to convey to him information, that the count of Brienne, with a conſiderable body of Epernon's cavalry, lay diſperſed, in a ſtate of negligence and ſecurity, not far from Blois. Mayenne, profiting of the intelligence, attacked him without delay, cut in pieces a great number of his troops, and made Brienne himſelf priſoner. Encouraged by ſo proſperous a beginning, and informed that Henry himſelf was not ſecure in the poſition which he occupied at Tours; the duke reſolved to make an attempt upon his quarters, before the junction of the Hugonots ſhould render him too formidable. Arriving unexpectedly, after a forced march, in the ſuburbs, his advanced body of horſe had nearly captured the king; who, unapprehenſive of danger, had rode out, accompanied only by a few officers, with an intention to reconnoitre, and fortify the poſt. If the general of the League had inſtantly availed himſelf of the ſurprize occaſioned by his appearance, and aſſailed the royal forces on every ſide; it is more than probable, that he might have obtained a deciſive victory: nor did he want adherents in the city itſelf, who, in ſuch a caſe, would have riſen, and completed the confuſion. But, the characteriſtic caution and prudence of Mayenne rendered him averſe to hazardous experiments, and allowed time to his opponents, for making a vigorous defence. Henry, on this occaſion, proved to his ſubjects, that, however his mind had been enervated by indolence and habits of effeminacy, he was not deſtitute either of perſonal courage, or of military capacity. Although unarmed, and unprepared for action, he betrayed no agitation; iſſued his orders with compoſure, and was every where preſent. During the ſubſequent part of the engagement, as the event was dubious, and

29th April.

8th May.

Attack of the ſuburbs of Tours.

Courage diſplayed by Henry.

and might be unfortunate; his judicious directions repreſſed the intemperate ardor of the nobility, controuled the ſeditious ſpirit of the inhabitants, and were highly inſtrumental to render ineffectual the deſigns of the enemy. The royal troops, animated by the preſence and exertions of their ſovereign, behaved with incredible bravery, under manifeſt diſadvantages of number and ſituation. But, Mayenne, maſter of an eminence, from whence his artillery played upon the ſuburbs; and ſupplying with freſh ſoldiers, the places of thoſe who fell; towards the evening completely gained poſſeſſion of the poſt, notwithſtanding the deſperate reſiſtance made by Chatillon, who arrived with the vanguard of the Hugonots. The two armies remained oppoſite each other, during the night; prepared to renew the conteſt on the enſuing day, if Mayenne, apprehenſive of the approach of the king of Navarre in perſon with all his forces, had not decamped early in the morning, and taken the road towards Mans. He was purſued by a body of the royal cavalry; and towards noon, the arrival of the king of Navarre at Tours, diffuſed univerſal confidence. Henry received him as the beſt ſupport of his future hopes and operations; committed to his charge the conduct of the army; and ordered him to march forwards to Beaugency on the Loire (14).

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Mayenne decamps.

At the news of the duke of Mayenne's retreat, the nobility, who had regarded Henry's ſituation and affairs as deſperate, finding that he was ſtill able to make ſo vigorous a defence, flocked to the royal ſtandard. The revolt of Poitiers, which declared for the League, was over-balanced by the ſucceſs which, in other parts of the kingdom, attended

The nobility aſſiſt the king.

17th May.

(14) De Thou, vol. x. p. 622—628. Davila, p. 799—805. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 186—189. Sully's Memoirs, folio edition, vol. i. p. 65 and 66. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 386—388.

him;

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him; and only energy seemed wanting, to secure a prompt and happy termination of the war. Senlis, a city in the vicinity of Paris, having returned to its allegiance, and called in Thoré, brother to marshal Montmorenci; was soon afterwards besieged by the duke of Aumale, at the head of a numerous force, principally collected from among the inhabitants of the metropolis. He had been joined under the walls by Balagny, governor of Cambray, with four thousand troops; and the place was reduced to the utmost extremities. In these circumstances, the duke of Longueville, aided by the celebrated La Noue, who had acquired a high reputation during the civil wars of France, did not hesitate to attack the Leaguers, though inferior to them in numbers, artillery, and every preparation. They obtained a decisive victory; cut to pieces twelve hundred of the besiegers, and obliged Aumale to seek his safety in a precipitate flight. Senlis was not only relieved; but, the victorious royalists, pursuing their advantage, threw supplies of provisions into the castle of Vincennes, and even fired some vollies of cannon against Paris itself. On the other hand, Chatillon, at the head of a body of cavalry, was not less successful in a rencounter with Saveuse and La Brosse, two adherents of the League, whom he charged and defeated near Bonneval, in the province of Chartres. Both the chiefs perished in the action, together with above a hundred of the nobility of Picardy (15).

Siege of Senlis.

17th May. Victory of the royalists.

18th May. Subsequent advantages.

Such was the alarm occasioned in the metropolis, by the disaster at Senlis, and so dejected were the boldest partizans of the family of Guise; that the council of the Union having met, determined in-

Alarm at Paris.

(15) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 204—212. De Thou, vol. x. p. 632—643. Davila, p. 805—808, and 810. Sully, vol. i. p. 66. L'Etoile, p. 280.

stantly

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ſtantly to ſolicit the return of Mayenne. The ducheſs of Montpenſier, who perſonally deſpiſed the duke of Aumale, and whoſe contempt was augmented by his recent defeat; urged her brother not to loſe a moment in re-aſſuring the fickle and terrified inhabitants of the capital. That general, after his ill ſucceſs before Tours, had made himſelf maſter of Alençon in Normandy; and he no ſooner received the intelligence of La Noue's victory, together with the meſſengers from Paris, than he bent his march thither. His appearance appeaſed, though it did not extinguiſh, the popular emotion; and he prepared for a vigorous oppoſition. But, the tide of fortune appeared to have rapidly turned in favor of the crown; and Henry, after experiencing all its rigor, was on the point of reſuming his nearly extinct prerogatives. No effective impediment was interpoſed to the progreſs of his forces, who ſucceſſively ſtormed the few places that ventured on reſiſtance. At Eſtampes, which was taken by aſſault, the king, irritated at the pertinacity of his rebellious ſubjects, abandoned the place to pillage, and cauſed the magiſtrates to be immediately executed. To augment his ſatisfaction, Sancy, whom he had diſpatched to levy an army in Switzerland, ſucceeded beyond his moſt ſanguine expectations. That faithful and zealous miniſter not only induced the Cantons to aid him with troops; but he obtained from them a ſupply of money, ſtill more eſſential in the diſtreſſed condition of his ſovereign's finances. After having carried an offenſive war into the dominions of the duke of Savoy, in retaliation for his invaſion and capture of the marquiſate of Saluzzo; Sancy conducted the Swiſs and German forces into Burgundy. Near Langres, in that province, La Noue and the duke of Longueville, by Henry's orders, met him, in order to ſuperintend

22d May.

Return of Mayenne to the capital.

Rapid progreſs of the royal army.

Military operations.

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perintend and direct his march towards Paris, the point of general union. So many fortunate events were checquered, but, in no degree, counterbalanced, by the ill success of the count of Soissons; who, having been sent to command in Brittany, was surprized, defeated, and made prisoner, by the duke of Mercœur, at Chateau Giron, near Rennes (16).

July. The king, advancing rapidly towards the capital, unopposed by any enemy, was joined at Poissy, on the Seine, by Montpensier, at the head of a considerable body of men, from Normandy. With a view of reducing Paris to experience the distresses of famine, he laid siege to Pontoise, which surrendered, after a brave and obstinate defence. On the following day, Sancy having redoubled his speed, in order to arrive in the royal camp, passed the bridge of Poissy, with his numerous army, amounting to near ten thousand Switzers, two thousand German infantry, and fifteen hundred cavalry of the same nation. They were reviewed by Henry in person, who publickly returned his acknowledgments to their commander, for so signal a service, rendered still more important, by the critical emergency in which it was performed. The troops of the League were driven from St. Cloud, by the impetuosity of the royalists; and the pass which that village commanded on the Seine, being immediately occupied by the king in person, who established there the head-quarters, Paris began to be closely invested on every side. His forces exceeded thirty thousand in number, elated by success, and desirous of displaying their fidelity and courage. On the contrary, the affairs of Mayenne were declining, and nearly desparate. His troops scarcely amounted

24th July. Capture of Poissy.

Arrival of the Swiss auxiliaries.

Henry approaches Paris.

29th July.

State of Mayenne.

(16) De Thou, vol. x. p. 614—661. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 213—220. Davila, p. 808—812. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 176—180.

to

to eight thouſand foot, and about eighteen hundred horſe, diminiſhing hourly and rapidly, in conſequence of famine, diſcontent, and ſcarcity of ſubſiſtence. The ſuccours, which the dukes of Lorrain and Nemours had undertaken to conduct, were diſtant, and could not avert the immediate danger. Mayenne himſelf, who had quartered his ſoldiers in the ſuburbs of the capital, vainly endeavoured to reſtore tranquillity, and to allay the terrors of the inhabitants. There were, beſides, in the city, a number of perſons, well affected to the royal cauſe, who only waited a favorable moment to declare, and to exert themſelves in its behalf. All the exhortations of the ducheſſes of Guiſe, Nemours, and Montpenſier, were ineffectual to ſuſtain the Pariſians, under the apprehenſion of a puniſhment, imminent and ſevere. It was generally known, that Henry, rendered inexorable by the inſolence and atrocity of their conduct, had declared his determination to exact a cruel and memorable atonement, which might impreſs his rebellious ſubjects with awe, throughout the kingdom. Every meaſure was already taken for a general aſſault, the ſucceſs of which could ſcarcely be doubtful. Mayenne, with a generous, though ineffectual deſpair, had embraced the reſolution of putting himſelf at the head of four thouſand of his choiceſt troops, devoted to death; of charging the enemy, and either cutting his way through them, or periſhing on the field of battle. No ſituation could be more hopeleſs than that of the League; nor any triumph more aſſured, than that of Henry; when one of thoſe events which mock all calculation, and decide the fate of nations, deprived the king of his crown and life, at the ſame time that it extricated Mayenne from manifeſt and almoſt inevitable deſtruction (17).

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Danger, and conſternation of the capital.

(17) Davila, p. 812—815. De Thou, vol. x. p. 661—666.

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1589. History of Clement.

A Monk, scarcely twenty-three years old, of the Dominican order, by name James Clement, was the author of so extraordinary and important a revolution. Naturally ferocious, gloomy, and capable of projecting the most daring enterprize; he possessed the intrepidity and coolness requisite for its execution. Dissolute, ignorant, and easily excited to commit any act, however immoral or atrocious, when encouraged by the exhortations of his superiors, he undertook, at the suggestion, and with the approbation of Bourgoing, the prior of his convent, to assassinate the king. Every artifice which cunning can practise upon credulity and fanaticism, was used to sustain, and to inflame his purpose. Not only earthly rewards and honours; but, a celestial recompence was assured to the champion and the martyr of the Holy Union. The duchess of Montpensier, menaced by Henry with the most exemplary and ignominious punishment, as soon as he should be master of Paris; is even said to have made sacrifices, calculated to animate a depraved and sensual Monk, and to stimulate him to the perpetration of any crime, however flagitious. The manners of that age, and the magnitude of the impending evil, render it highly probable, that Clement was encouraged to the attempt by her, as well as by the duke of Mayenne himself. It is inconteſtable, that he was provided with letters of introduction, by the president of the parliament of Paris, Harlai, then a prisoner in the Bastile; and by the count of Brienne, who was detained in the Louvre. Those zealous adherents of the crown, were imposed on by his assurances of loyalty, and of a desire to repair with important intelligence, to the royal camp.

He undertakes to assassinate Henry.

31st July. He arrives in the royal camp.

Furnished with his credentials, the Monk quitted Paris; and being soon stopped by the advanced guards, was conducted to La Guesle, the solicitor general. As he professed to be charged with a mes-

sage

ſage to the king, of the moſt confidential nature; it being too late to procure him an audience on the ſame evening, he remained with La Gueſle, ſupped heartily, and during the night ſlept with perfect compoſure. Henry had received ſo many, and ſuch recent intimations, of perſons being employed to aſſaſſinate him, that it would have been difficult, if not impracticable, for any man, except an eccleſiaſtic, to have procured acceſs to him, without previous precautions. But his predilection for all individuals of the monaſtic order, exceed belief, and laid him open to the ſnare: a circumſtance, of which Clement's inſtigators were, unqueſtionably, well apprized. On the enſuing morning, at an early hour, when the king was ſtill undreſſed, Clement was brought into his preſence; and having preſented the letter from the count of Brienne, while Henry was attentively occupied in peruſing it, the Monk took a knife from his ſleeve, and with incredible quickneſs, plunged it into his belly. Feeling himſelf wounded, the king inſtantly drew the weapon, with which he ſtruck his aſſaſſin upon the forehead. La Gueſle, Lognac, and Mirepoix, who were preſent, not maſters of their indignation and horror, at the ſight of their ſovereign, bleeding, and as they imagined, expiring; fell upon the monk with their ſwords, and put him to death. His body was thrown out of the window, burnt by the ſoldiers, and his aſhes ſcattered in the Seine (18).

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1ſt Auguſt. Aſſaſſination of the king.

Circumſtances accompanying it.

Henry's wound, though alarming, did not, on the firſt inſpection, appear to be mortal. But, when the ſurgeons had examined it anew, and had aſcertained, that the bowels were pierced, they announced to him his diſſolution, as certain. He received the information with calmneſs, ordered the doors of his apartment to be thrown open in order

Death of Henry.

(18) De Thou, vol. x. p. 667—671. Davila, p. 815—817.

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to admit the nobility, and prepared, with resignation, for his approaching end. Having repeatedly embraced the king of Navarre, and conjured, as well as advised him to embrace the Catholic religion, if he ever hoped to reign over the French; he declared that prince to be his only, and legitimate successor. As such, he exhorted the officers and nobles who surrounded his bed, to regard him in the light of their future sovereign, notwithstanding his difference of religious persuasion. He expressed his deep concern at the unfortunate condition in which he left the kingdom; performed with marks of penitence and piety the ceremonies enjoined by the Romish church, and expired on the following day. By his queen, Louisa of Vaudemont, he left no issue; and at the time of his decease, he had not quite completed his thirty-eighth year, of which he had reigned above fifteen. His body embalmed with as much decorum, as the circumstances of the time would permit, was carried to Compiegne; and Benoise, one of his few faithful servants, interred his heart and his entrails, privately, in the church of St. Cloud (19).

His exhortations, and commands.

2d August.

Character of Henry.

The character of Henry the Third is strikingly pourtrayed, and faithfully delineated, in the events of his reign. No prince ever excited greater and more universal expectation, before he succeeded to the crown: none ever more completely disappointed the hopes entertained of his capacity and virtue. The lustre of his victories at Jarnac and Montcontour, where he commanded the armies of Charles the Ninth, gave him the highest reputation throughout all Europe, and facilitated his election to the throne of Poland. But, he was scarcely arrived in

(19) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 220—224. L'Etoile, p. 284—286, and 289—300. Sulli, vol. i. p. 67 and 68. Chiverni, vol. i. p. 140—143. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 394—398. De Thou, vol. x. p. 671—674. Davila, p. 817—819. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. iii. p. 180—183.

that

that country, when the death of his brother induced him to fly from his new capital, with circumſtances of precipitation unbecoming his dignity, and injurious to his fame. Before he reached the frontiers of his hereditary dominions, his improvident liberality had already diminiſhed the poſſeſſions, and contracted the territories of France, by the donation of Pignerol and Savillan to Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy. Inſtead of extinguiſhing the civil wars, and diſpenſing peace to all his ſubjects, upon his return, as policy and wiſdom dictated; the pernicious counſels of his mother and of his intereſted or perfidious miniſters, impelled him to perſecute the Hugonots, who only demanded toleration and protection. Convinced by experience of the impoſſibility of tyrannizing over the conſcience, or reducing the Proteſtants by the ſword; he adopted more enlarged and humane maxims of government: the edict of Poitiers, which reſtored tranquillity, was his own meaſure, and always cheriſhed by him as ſuch. But, the Guiſes, whom Henry ſtudiouſly depreſſed; mortified at the diminution of the power and conſideration which they had enjoyed under the three preceding reigns; and incenſed to ſee the elevation of favorites and minions to the higheſt offices of truſt and dignity; counteracted his deſigns. In order to do it with effect, they knew that religion muſt be made the maſk for concealing and advancing their ſchemes of ambition. The king, notwithſtanding his diſinclination to war, was reluctantly compelled to violate his engagements, to reſcind his edicts, and even to become eventually the inſtrument of his own humiliation. Guiſe, maſter of the metropolis, drove his ſovereign from thence; dictated the conditions upon which he conſented to a reconciliation; and inſulted the monarch, whom he had previouſly diſarmed. Yet, ſuch was the paſſive and indolent temper of Henry, and ſo rooted

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His inclination to toleration.

Violence, exerciſed over him by the League.

was

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was his antipathy to the Hugonots; that if Guiſe had not proceeded to acts which left no doubt of his intention to uſurp the whole effective authority of the crown; the king would, probably, never have reſiſted. A rebellion was the conſequence; not ſo much of the aſſaſſination of the Guiſes, as of the inactive ſecurity which followed, on the part of Henry; and it produced, by a neceſſary train of events, the reconciliation with the king of Navarre. At the moment when he juſtly anticipated the reduction of Paris, he periſhed by the hand of a private and obſcure individual, whoſe order he had always protected and favoured. Throughout his whole life, he ſeems to have cheriſhed thoſe, who betrayed, or outraged him; and he was deſtined to experience the moſt cruel injuries, from his neareſt connexions. Joyeuſe, whom he had raiſed to the higheſt point of greatneſs, deſerted his benefactor, to join the League. His brother-in-law, the duke of Mercœur, revolted, notwithſtanding the diſtinguiſhed favors received from the crown; and he attempted to render himſelf independant in the province of Bretagne. Catherine of Medicis, his mother, with a view to balance the credit of the minions, ſecretly inſtigated and encouraged the princes of Lorrain, in their treaſonable projects of aggrandizement. Even his own queen, a princeſs of irreproachable manners, but, of a bigotted and melancholy diſpoſition, was ſeduced to eſpouſe the intereſts of her family, rather than that of her huſband.

Fatality and imprudence of his attachments.

Henry poſſeſſed many amiable qualities, and ſome great endowments. To a graceful and majeſtic perſon, he added ſuavity of manners, affability, liberality, clemency, the love of juſtice, courage, and temperance. But, all his virtues degenerated into vices, or were enervated by indolence and pleaſure, to

Endowments, and vices of Henry.

to such a degree, as to call in question their very existence. His munificence became profusion; and ceased to attach those who were the objects of it, because they attributed his benefits more to facility and prodigality, than to generosity. He degraded the majesty of his high rank, and almost rendered questionable the sanity of his understanding by his puerile, or unbecoming associations with Monks and Penitents. Far from producing the effect which he intended, of acquiring popularity, such a conduct completed his ruin. His dissipation necessitated him to have recourse to the most fatal expedients, to maintain his court, and to fill the exhausted treasury. The venality of charges, multiplication of offices, and accumulation of taxes, at length undermined the foundations on which rested his throne, and enabled his enemies to achieve their pernicious purposes. At his decease, he left the monarchy convulsed and nearly overthrown: it required the talents, heroism, and good fortune of Henry the Fourth, to restore it, and to disperse the chaos, into which the mal-administration of his predecessor had plunged the kingdom. The circumstances in which he expired, and the atrocity of the crime that produced his death, rendered him, in some degree, regretted; and seemed to expiate, or obliterate, the series of errors, faults, and vices, which render his reign one of the most melancholy and calamitous portions of modern history (20).

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State of France at his decease.

In his person, expired the branch of Valois, which, under thirteen kings, had reigned over the French nation, during the space of two hundred and sixty-one years. With the single exception of Philip of Valois himself, source of the line, they were distinguished by their love and protection of letters. Charles the Fifth, in wisdom; Louis the

Retrospect of the reigns of the princes of Valois.

Virtues.

(20) De Thou, vol. x. p. 674—678. Davila, p. 820.

Twelfth,

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Twelfth, in paternal affection for his people; and Francis the Firſt, in magnanimity, elevation of mind, and cultivation of the arts, have not yielded to any monarchs, of any period. Perſonal courage ſeems to have been hereditary among them; though its peculiar and characteriſtic quality was varied in different princes. It was raſh and impetuous, in Philip and John: ſubdued to the dictates of policy, in Charles the Fifth, and Louis the Eleventh: unequal, in Charles the Seventh: adventurous, in Charles the Eighth; ſteady and temperate, in Louis the Twelfth; brilliant and captivating, in Francis the Firſt: ferocious, in Charles the Ninth: indolent and paſſive, in Henry the Third.

Their virtues were eclipſed by their greater vices and misfortunes. Two of the number, John and Francis, were taken priſoners in the field, and conducted as captives to London and Madrid. It would be difficult to parallel the reigns of Charles the Sixth, of Charles the Ninth, and of Henry the Third, in every ſpecies of misfortune, reſulting from civil and religious anarchy. Even the moſt proſperous and tranquil periods were clouded by inteſtine commotions, or ſtained by cruelty and tyranny. If neither of theſe deſcriptions will apply to the mild adminiſtration of Louis the Twelfth; yet, that beneficent reign, ſhort in its duration, was marked by continual foreign war, and the greateſt national loſſes and reverſes. Louis the Eleventh ſtands nearly alone, in the liſt of monſters, who have trampled upon the rights of humanity; and the ſuperiority of his talents, employed for purpoſes of deſtruction, only renders him more conſpicuouſly an object of deteſtation.

Vices and misfortunes.

Neither their defects of character, fortune, nor adminiſtration, were, nevertheleſs, ſuch, as to prevent the gradual and progreſſive augmentation of the grandeur, power, and dominions of France. Philip of Valois obtained by addreſs and purchaſe, the

Progreſſive aggrandizement of France.

the important province of Dauphiné, with all its dependancies. To the valor and good conduct of Charles the Seventh, was due the expulsion of the English from the kingdom, of which they occupied so considerable a portion. Louis the Eleventh added the rich acquisition of Burgundy, by conquest, on the death of Charles the Bold; and of Provence, by conquest, at the decease of Charles the Third, the last prince of the Angevin race. Brittany was acquired by the marriage of Charles the Eighth, with Anne, the heiress of that duchy; confirmed by Louis the Twelfth's subsequent nuptials with the same princess; and finally incorporated into the monarchy, by Francis the First. The extinction of the house of Valois, and the elevation of that of Bourbon to the throne, forms a great and interesting æra in the history of France.

THE

THE

HISTORY

OF

FRANCE.

BOOK THE SECOND.

Age of HENRY THE THIRD.

CHAP. I.

Nature, limits, and extent of the royal power, under the laſt princes of Valois.—Function of the States General.—Inſtitution, and privileges of the parliaments.—Provincial aſſemblies.—Revenues.—Management of the finances.—Public funds.—Coin.—Military force.—Infantry.—Cavalry.—Arms.—Exceſſes of the ſoldiery.—Artillery.—Ranſoms.—Navy.—Gallies.—General ſtate of the French marine.

THE prerogatives, enjoyed and exerciſed, as well by Henry the Third, as by all the kings of France, his predeceſſors, during the courſe of the ſixteenth century, might be ſaid to approach nearly to that ſpecies of power, which we juſtly denominate arbitrary and unlimited. Louis the Eleventh, who combined

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Prerogatives of the French kings.

CHAP. I.

combined in his character greater vices and greater talents, than were, perhaps, ever ſeen united on the throne in one man, had, by the oppreſſion and deſtruction of the nobility, erected the deſpotiſm of the crown upon their ruins. The people were gainers by the exchange of a ſingle tyrant, inſtead of many: for, it would be equally abſurd and falſe, to ſuppoſe, that, at any period ſince the elevation of the family of Capet, and the formation of the feudal ſyſtem; the nation collectively was poſſeſſed of civil liberty, guaranteed by laws againſt royal and ariſtocratic encroachment. Almoſt all the odious branches of prerogative, exerciſed in England by the princes of the houſes of Tudor, and wreſted from thoſe of Stuart, were veſted by long preſcription in the French monarchs. The ableſt civilians, the graveſt writers, and the wiſeſt magiſtrates, who flouriſhed between the acceſſion of Henry the Second and the death of Henry the Third, agreed in recognizing the unlimited powers of the crown. "The kings "of France," ſays Cayet, a contemporary author, "do not reſemble the Poliſh ſovereigns, and others "who ſwear at their election to obſerve the laws "made by thoſe who have elected them; but, on "the contrary, they have the ſupreme and abſolute "authority over their people. On their will, de"pend all their deliberations of peace and war; the "taxes and tributes, the diſtribution of benefices, "offices, governments, and magiſtrates (1)." It ſeems ſcarcely poſſible to deſcribe deſpotiſm in clearer colours. Charles the Ninth, when hardly paſt the limits of childhood, did not heſitate to ſay to the parliament of Paris, compoſed of the moſt reſpectable individuals for age, virtue, and talents; "It is for you to obey my orders, without pre"ſuming to examine them; for I know better than

Unlimited power, exerciſed by them.

Language of Charles the Ninth,

(1) Chron. Novenn. vol. i. p. 4.

"you

"you what is the cuſtom of the kingdom, and "what order and decorum demand (2)." Whatever indignation ſuch a ſpeech might excite, it produced no remonſtrance, nor reclamation on the part of the parliament.

When the Proteſtant princes of the German empire preſumed, in 1586, to repreſent to Henry the Third the injuſtice of violating his own edicts, granting liberty of conſcience to his Hugonot ſubjects; he replied, in preſence of the whole court, in theſe words: "It belongs to me alone, to judge, "according to my prudence, of what may contri- "bute to the public welfare; to make laws for pro- "curing it; to interpret thoſe laws; to change, or "to aboliſh them, as I ſhall judge proper: I have "done it hitherto, and I ſhall do it in future (3)." Even in the memorable aſſembly of the States General at Blois, two years afterwards, although he profeſſed his readineſs to abide by the determinations which he ſhould embrace, in conjunction with the delegates of the nation; yet, he did not omit to ſtate, that ſuch a condeſcenſion was the pure effect of his own deſire to contribute to the felicity of his people. He even apologized for ſo ſtrong a deviation from the conduct of his predeceſſors; and obviated the reproaches which might be made him, for ſubjecting himſelf to the laws which he had previouſly ordained (4). Montluc, Davila, Chiverny, Villeroi, and almoſt all the other writers of that period, when ſpeaking of the royal authority, regard it as paramount to law, and ſuperior to any controul.

and of Henry the Third.

Among the branches of prerogative moſt frequently exerciſed, was that of arbitrary impriſon-

Arbitrary imprisonment,

(2) Le Laboureur ſur Caſtelnau, vol. iii. p. 27. Brantome, vol. iv. p. 34.

(3) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 609. (4) Ibid. vol. x. p 301.

ment.

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ment. No rank, profeſſion, nor ſtation were exempt, or protected from it; and the cauſes, or pretexts upon which it was enforced, were ſo various, that they might be ſaid to include every ſpecies of offence. Treaſon or hereſy were the moſt ordinary; and ſuſpicion alone, independant of proof, was ſufficient to condemn to a long and ſevere captivity, any ſubject, however elevated, or illuſtrious. D'Andelot, colonel-general of the French infantry, and brother to the celebrated Coligni, being queſtioned by Henry the Second, reſpecting his belief of the real preſence in the Euchariſt; and having replied in a manner diſpleaſing to that orthodox monarch, was immediately ſent priſoner to the caſtle of Melun. He was, it is true, ſpeedily releaſed, at the powerful interceſſion of his uncle, the conſtable Montmorenci: but even the ſanctity of juſtice could not protect from a ſimilar treatment, various members of the parliament of Paris. The preſidents du Bourg, and du Faur, ſuſpected of holding heretical doctrines, were ſeized while exerciſing their judicial functions, in their ſeats; and three others were arreſted in their houſes (5). Under the following reign, in 1560, Louis, prince of Condé, though allied to the royal blood, and attending the convocation of the States General, to which he had been invited by aſſurances of ſafety; was, notwithſtanding, arreſted, and committed to cuſtody. The caſe was rendered ſtill ſtronger, by the conſideration, that Francis the Second, who authorized ſo violent an act of authority, had not attained to manhood; and was, in the ſtrict ſenſe of the term, a minor, when he ventured upon the meaſure (6). Charles the Ninth, or, more properly, Catherine of Medicis, availing herſelf of his power, as he lay expiring; did not ſcruple, in 1574, to ſend the mar-

Under Henry the Second.

Francis the Second.

Charles the Ninth.

(5) D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 84. (6) Davila, p. 73.

ſhals

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ſhals Montmorenci and Coſſé, to the Baſtile, on ſuſpicions, never clearly aſcertained, of their being privy to the deſign of the duke of Alençon to withdraw from court. Nor did the quality of that prince himſelf, who was, after the deceaſe of Charles the Ninth, preſumptive heir to the crown, preſerve him from experiencing the ſame treatment. He, as well as Henry, king of Navarre, firſt prince of the blood, were long detained captive in the Louvre, by Henry the Third, from motives only of ſtate precaution (7).

Henry the Third.

The inſtitution and creation of commiſſions for the trial of crimes, pretended or real, was another branch of the royal authority, conſtantly enforced; and which laid, at the mercy of the crown, the life and freedom of every ſubject. Numerous, and ſtriking inſtances of this practice, occur throughout the reigns of the laſt princes of the houſe of Valois. In many, the forms, as well as the eſſence of juſtice, were equally violated. Henry the Second, a ſhort time before his death, after arreſting the members of the parliament of Paris, named commiſſioners to form a tribunal for their trial. It was compoſed of ſeveral counſellors of that body itſelf, ſelected for their approved zeal, or devotion to the orders of the court; of the biſhop of Paris, and the inquiſitor of the faith. Du Bourg pleaded his privilege as a counſellor of the parliament and of the church, in order to exempt himſelf from their juriſdiction: but, his objections were over ruled (8). Under Francis the Second, in 1560, by the edict of Romorentin, a court was erected in every parliament of the kingdom, to which was excluſively confined the trial of heretics. Theſe tribunals, from their ſeverity, were denominated "Les Chambres Ardentes:" a title,

Creation of tribunals for the trial of offences.

Tribunals for the trial of heretics.

(7) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 121 and 122. Davila, p. 399, 400.
(8) D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 84.

which

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which sufficiently denotes their destination. In the case of the prince of Condé, arrested towards the close of the same year, at Orleans, the crown, without any regard to his birth and privileges, named a tribunal to try him, composed only of three lawyers, taken from among the presidents and counsellors of the parliament of Paris; acting under the lord chancellor, as president. The attorney-general was plaintiff and accuser; the first notary of the court of parliament being appointed to take minutes of the proceedings on the trial. It will scarcely be matter of surprize, that such judges should declare the prince guilty of treason, and sentence him to lose his head. He vainly reclaimed the right of being tried before the parliament of Paris fully assembled, in the presence of the king, the peers of France, and all the great officers of the crown. No regard was paid to these demands, though founded on immemorial usage; and the royal pleasure supplied every deficiency in point of form (9).

Trial of the prince of Condé.

Right of levying taxes.

Nor did the power of the French kings, on a superficial view, appear to be less unlimited over the property, than over the lives and liberties of the subject. Louis the Eleventh, who sacrificed the nobility to his vengeance, did not venture to impose contributions on the people, without some form of law, and sanction of their representatives. It was not till the accession of Francis the First, that the French kings disdained to ask, and began to lay taxes on the nation, by the sole virtue and plenitude of their prerogative (10). Henry the Third, during the whole course of his reign, exercised it in its fullest extent; and he varied the modes of imposing them, and the contribution itself, in every possible way that ingenuity and oppression could

(9) L'Art de Verif. les Dates, tom. i. p. 645. Davila, p. 75.
(10) Memoires de Sully, vol. i. p. 428.

devise.

deviſe. In 1578, twenty-two new edicts, or taxes, were iſſued by him, and ſent to the parliament of Paris to be regiſtered and publiſhed (11). Seventeen more were added, at one time, in 1586; many of which were very onerous, and occaſioned univerſal complaint (12). As if theſe impoſitions were not ſufficiently heavy, arbitrary exactions, without the name of taxes, were forced from the people. In January, 1587, Henry demanded of the kingdom at large, the ſum of three hundred thouſand crowns; and of the city of Paris no leſs than three hundred and ſixty thouſand crowns, excluſively (13). Loans were another ordinary mode of raiſing ſupplies; and they were, as may be imagined, abſolutely compulſory. In 1576, the counſellors, and advocates of the parliament of Paris, were commanded to repair to the Louvre, and ordered to lend his majeſty, each, according to his ability, a certain ſum. About four thouſand pounds ſterling were raiſed by this expedient (14). Similar exactions were practiſed on the wealthy citizens of the metropolis.

Compulſory loans.

The creation of poſts and offices, for which the perſons who occupied or exerciſed them, paid conſiderable ſums, was one of the moſt intolerable abuſes, iſſuing out of the arbitrary power of the crown. It was, indeed, more injurious to the people, than beneficial to the exchequer; and was carried, under Henry the Third, to an incredible height. In 1581, nine edicts of this nature were publiſhed; and in the following year, four more were iſſued, the profits ariſing from which were avowedly deſtined for the two powerful favorites, Joyeuſe and Epernon (15). Villeroi expreſsly

Creation of offices.

Venality of places.

(11) L'Etoile, Journ. p. 31. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 729.
(12) De Thou, vol. ix p. 596. L'Etoile, p. 91.
(13) L'Etoile, p. 98.
(14) Memoires pour ſervir à l'Hiſt. de France, p. 65. L'Etoile, p. 17.
(15) L'Etoile, p. 42. Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 152.

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aſſerts, that fifteen, or ſixteen hundred officers were employed in the collection of the revenues, all of whom had purchaſed their places, and the aggregate of whoſe annual appointments amounted to near a hundred thouſand pounds ſterling. Of theſe, above one hundred and eighty were entitled treaſurers of France, and had each, a ſalary of five hundred crowns. He adds, as the ſtrongeſt proof of the peculation and plunder committed in the management of the finances, that every piece of three livres, or half a crown Engliſh, levied on the ſubject, was reduced, in paſſing through ſo many hands, to leſs than three-pence halfpenny, before it entered the royal treaſury (16). It is to be obſerved, that no higher, nor more inconteſtable authority than Villeroi, can be cited: he was ſecretary of ſtate under Charles the Ninth, Henry the Third, and Fourth; by all of whom he was entruſted with the moſt profound ſecrets of government.

Royal letters of requiſition.

It was cuſtomary to ſend letters, ſigned by the ſovereign, or by his miniſters, to corporate bodies, and even to individuals of reputed wealth, demanding either a free gift, or a loan of ſtipulated ſums. Few perſons dared to ſlight, or to refuſe the requiſition. Even eccleſiaſtics, who, in that age, were exempted under various pretences, from contributing, in due proportion, to the general wants of the ſtate, were frequently taxed by Henry. In 1578, inſtead of the tenth and twentieth, which he demanded of the clergy, he thought proper to ſubſtitute mandates, ſubſcribed with his own hand, deſiring them to lend him certain ſums. They were apportioned according to the faculties of the parties. The chapter of Paris "in Globo," was fixed at ſix hundred crowns: Mariau, a rich canon, at two hundred and fifty; and others, at inferior rates. This

(16) Villeroi, vol. iv. p. 425 and 426.

arbitrary

arbitrary ſubſtitution excited great murmurs, and does not ſeem have met with compliance in all inſtances (17). CHAP. I.

Perſons trading in the articles of wine and ſalt, appear to have been objects of royal rapacity, in a more than common degree. In December, 1582, all the wholeſale wine merchants in the city of Paris were compelled to pay within twenty-four hours, on pain of impriſonment, ſums from five hundred crowns, diminiſhing according to their ſuppoſed means, in a regular gradation. Similar demands were, at the ſame time, extended to the dealers in ſalt, throughout the whole kingdom (18). The people were every where obliged to purchaſe at the king's ſtorehouſe, ſuch a quantity of this latter article, as the commiſſaries, inſtituted for the purpoſe, ſhould eſtimate to be requiſite for their private conſumption. The edict, enjoining obedience to ſo cruel an act of oppreſſion, was obtained from Henry, in 1581; but, it met with very general oppoſition in the provinces (19). About the ſame time, he doubled the impoſition of ten ſous, or five pence, antecedently levied upon every hogſhead of wine, coming in or going out of all the cities of the kingdom, and their ſuburbs. It was neceſſary, in order to vanquiſh the repugnance of the parliament to publiſh this edict, that Henry ſhould write a menacing letter with his own hand, commanding ſubmiſſion (20).

Rapacious exactions from perſons in trade.

The people, compelled to purchaſe ſalt.

Duties upon wine.

The authority of the crown was not leſs arbitrary over the cuſtoms and duties, paid upon the importation, or exportation of every commodity into France. There were, however, treaties ſubſiſting

Cuſtoms and duties.

(17) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 99.
(18) Ibid p. 154.
(19) Ibid. p. 127.
(20) Ibid. p. 127 and 128.

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with foreign powers, particularly with England, by which the king was reſtrained from raiſing, or diminiſhing them, in all caſes, at his pleaſure. In 1577, upon the complaint of the Engliſh embaſſador, the augmented duties recently impoſed upon goods from that country, were taken off by the French government (21). It ſeems, in the river Garonne, and probably, throughout the whole kingdom, theſe were two and a half per cent. on every branch of merchandize, imported, or exported (22). The right of pre-emption was exerciſed by the crown; and we find Charles the Ninth, in 1573, iſſuing peremptory directions to the governor of Bourdeaux, to take meaſures for ſecuring all the beſt and fineſt wines made in its vicinity, for the uſe of Elizabeth, his ally, queen of England (23). Even over acts of a more private and perſonal nature, in which the revenue had no concern, immediate or remote, the royal interference was equally ſtrict and univerſal. No perſon, of whatever quality, could paſs the limits of France, without permiſſion. Catherine of Medicis, when regent, after the death of Charles the Ninth, iſſued a prohibition to travel, unleſs after leave obtained (24). Marriages the moſt violent and compulſory, were celebrated between perſons of the higheſt deſcription and rank, in conſequence of a peremptory injunction of the king.

Pre emption.

Inferior prerogatives.

Charles the Ninth, deſirous to attach to himſelf Chriſtopher de Baſſompierre, and to fix him in the court of France, ſelected for him a young lady of noble birth, named Louiſa de Radeval, niece to marſhal Briſſac. Her fortune amounted to the pro-

(21) Le Laboureur ſur Caſtelnau, vol. iii. p. 529.
(22) Ibid. vol. iii. p. 536.
(23) Ibid. p. 367.
(24) Ibid. p. 417.

digious

digious sum of fifty thousand crowns. She expressed, as did all her relations, the most unqualified reluctance to contract a marriage with a German, who was unacquainted with the language and manners of France, and who was not possessed of any patrimonial inheritance, being only a younger brother. But, Charles's determination overcame every impediment, and procured the immediate celebration of the nuptials (25). It may be matter of surprize, that among the exertions of so undefined or unlimited a prerogative, we find no trace of two branches, possessed by the English princes down to Charles the First, and which were strong badges of servitude. These were purveyance, and wardships. If the former was ever enforced, it was only a temporary act of violence or oppression. No court of wards existed in France, at any period of the sixteenth century. CHAP. I.

Barriers against the power of the crown.

Notwithstanding the enormous extent of the power vested in the French kings, the wisdom of the nation had erected bulwarks for its restraint, when too violently exerted. These were, however, it must be owned, rather intended for the protection of property, than calculated for securing their lives and freedom. In fact, we find by experience, that cruelty is directed towards a few individuals: rapacity extends over a whole people. The two great barriers between the crown and the subject, were the assembly of the States General, and the Parliaments; peculiarly, that of Paris. The States, which were, under various denominations, coeval with the monarchy itself; and which bore an intimate resemblance to the parliaments of England; were composed of delegates from the nobility, clergy, and the third estate. The French monarchs, who did not, like the English princes of the family of Tudor,

The States General.

(25) Memoires de Bassompierre, vol. i. p. 15.

their

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their contemporaries, ſtand in need of the approbation of the repreſentatives of the nation, to confirm their ordinary acts of tyranny, or to impoſe ſubſidies; had ſuffered the aſſembly of the States General to fall into deſuetude, during a great part of the ſixteenth century. Francis the Firſt, in the courſe of a long reign of thirty-two years, marked by many reverſes, had never once convoked that body. They were tumultuouſly aſſembled, for a ſhort time, after the memorable defeat of St. Quintin, by Henry the Second, his ſon. But, when Francis the Second aſcended the throne, and the great factions began to diſturb the tranquillity of the kingdom, it was deemed neceſſary to have recourſe to the powerful engine of the States. They were held at Orleans, in 1560; interrupted by the deceaſe of the young king; and reſumed in the following year, by Charles the Ninth, his ſucceſſor. Henry the Third aſſembled them twice; in 1576, and in 1588. In order to form an accurate idea of the degree of influence which the national repreſentatives poſſeſſed, in reſtraining or tempering the authority of the crown, it is requiſite to follow the leading ſteps of their conduct.

Rarely convoked.

Objects propoſed by Henry the Third, in aſſembling the States.

The oſtenſible motive of Henry, in convoking the States in 1576, was to determine on the meaſures to be embraced reſpecting the Hugonots. But, his concealed objects were, to induce them to grant him extraordinary aids of money, and to conſent to the alienation of a part of the royal domain. At their meeting, he promiſed them, in his harangue from the throne, to obſerve inviolably the regulations, which, in concert with him, they ſhould make; and to grant no diſpenſation nor privilege, that could derogate from them in any manner. When, however, he found, that the third eſtate was proceeding to adopt counſels calculated to diminiſh his prerogatives, and tending to render

render themſelves independant in their deliberations; he changed his behaviour, and either eluded, or rejected their demands. The States, on their part, evinced a ſpirit of energy and freedom, which might have done honor to the repreſentatives of any people. Far from conſenting to the king's requiſitions, they refuſed to grant the ſubſidies; and their language relative to the other propoſition, was ſtill more firm and inflexible. Undiſmayed by the apprehenſion of Henry's reſentment, Hemar, preſident of Bourdeaux, in the names of the three orders, declared, that "the domain of the crown was "facred and inalienable; that no caſe, however "extreme, could be ſtated, in which they could "permit of its being diminiſhed; that the ſovereign "was only the poſſeſſor and tenant during life; "and that the nation being the proprietors, it was "a fundamental law of the ſtate, not to alienate "the ſmalleſt part of the domain." They not only reſiſted every artifice and blandiſhment of the court, which was exerted to ſhake their determination on this point; but, their remonſtrance operated ſo powerfully on the king, as to induce him to relinquiſh his intention, and prevented the further proſecution of his plan for ſelling crown lands to the amount of fifty thouſand crowns of annual revenue (26).

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Energy of the States.

They refuſe to permit the alienation of the royal domain.

Although Henry could not vanquiſh the meritorious pertinacity of the States on theſe points, he ſtill retained, undiminiſhed, his own prerogatives: but, in 1588, when they met again at Blois, he held a very different language. Preſſed by difficulties; inſulted by the Guiſes, who had driven him from his capital, and diſgraced him in the eſtimation of all France; anxious to regain the confidence of his ſubjects, as the only means of triumphing

Submiſſion of the crown to the States, in 1588.

(26) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 450, and p. 474—477.

over

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over the powerful faction, by which he was beset; he laid the unlimited powers of the crown at the feet of the nation. All the abuſes, malverſations, and oppreſſions which had grown up by long preſcription, and which ſeemed to be inherent in the very eſſence of the monarchical authority, he voluntarily and ſpontaneouſly ſubjected to the cenſure of the national delegates. He offered to revoke all reverſions already conferred, without exception; and never to grant any in future. He referred to their wiſdom, the laws which reſpected trials, appeals, and the expences attending courts of judicature. He ſubmitted to them the ſtate of manufactures and commerce: allowed them to examine the finances, and to make whatever regulations they might think proper for their management and amelioration; concluding by an aſſurance, that he would ſo regulate his own houſehold in future, that it ſhould ſerve as a model to all his ſubjects for imitation. To render the laws, which might be framed by the aſſembly, equally binding and permanent, he even condeſcended to become accountable, like the loweſt ſubject, for any infraction of them, under the penalty of treaſon; and conſented that they ſhould be tranſmitted to the various parliaments of the kingdom, to receive the moſt univerſal ſanction, as inviolable and unchangeable (27).

Magnitude of Henry's conceſſions.

It is difficult to imagine any conceſſions greater than theſe, or, on which it would have been more eaſy to have founded the baſis of a free conſtitution. Henry pointed it out to them, himſelf; and ſuch was his ſituation, that he muſt have yielded to any equitable proportion which the States had dictated. But, in that great body, conſiſting of near four hundred members, there was neither a ſpirit of patriotiſm, nor an enlarged comprehenſion of the in-

(27) De Thou, vol. x. p. 378—382.

eſtimable

eſtimable advantages attached to civil liberty. Europe contained ſcarcely any model of a limited monarchy. Spain, England, and Italy, might be ſaid to obey princes, poſſeſſed of very extenſive and arbitrary power. In the aſſembly at Blois, the individuals compoſing the States, were either bigotted Catholics, bent on the extermination of the Hugonots; or violent and factious men, corrupted with the gold of Spain, and devoted to the ambitious views of the duke of Guiſe. That enterprizing chief, far from deſiring to emancipate the people, or to diminiſh the royal authority, only aſpired to become himſelf the depoſitory of it, and to reduce the king to the ſhadow of a ſovereign. The favorable moment for affixing legal barriers to the deſpotiſm of the crown, was loſt: Guiſe himſelf ſoon became the victim of his criminal projects; and Henry, liberated from his apprehenſions, laid aſide his diſpoſition to deſpoil himſelf of his power and prerogatives.

Nature of the aſſembly at Blois.

The parliaments might be ſaid to form a ſecond bulwark againſt the tyranny and oppreſſions of the crown. At the cloſe of Henry the Second's reign, they amounted only to ſeven in number; and were, ſtrictly, no more than the ſupreme tribunals of civil and criminal judicature, throughout France. But, they poſſeſſed the advantage of being permanent; whereas the States were only convoked under circumſtances of national danger, for a limited and uncertain time. The parliament of Paris was, beſides, the organ and inſtrument, through which the edicts emanating from the throne, received the ſtamp of validity. It belonged to that venerable aſſembly to regiſter, verify, and publiſh every pecuniary edict, or impoſition, laid by the ſovereign on the people. Though this privilege was originally intended for no other purpoſe, than to give greater ſolemnity and publicity to acts of ſtate; yet, it enabled the parliament

The parliaments.

Their privileges.

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parliament to make frequent, and sometimes effectual oppositions to such taxes, as were by them considered to be oppressive, or unjust. Many striking examples of their patriotic and independant spirit, which occur under the reign of Henry the Third, sufficiently prove, that virtue and freedom were not extinct among the French. In 1578, the king having sent no less a number of edicts, instituting new contributions, than twenty-two, to be registered, the parliament refused to sanction them; and having selected some of the least exceptionable, returned the others. All the menaces of Henry could not induce them to publish those which appeared to be oppressive (28). A stronger instance of the right to oppose such acts of despotism, appears in 1581; when Birague, the chancellor, insisting on the immediate verification of nine new taxes; the first president of the parliament stood up in his place, and replied, in the collective names of his colleagues; that "according to the law of the king, "which is his absolute power, the edicts might "pass; but, that, according to the law of the "kingdom, which is reason and equity, they could "not, and ought not, to be published." Henry persisting, they forebore, however, from further opposition (29). It became necessary for that prince to come in person, and hold a bed of justice, in order to surmount the impediments, which the parliament threw in the way of the taxes laid on by him, in 1583 and 1586; and it required the exertion of all the powers vested in the crown, to enforce their promulgation (30). None of his measures tended so much to render him universally odious, and to produce the defection which he experienced towards the

Resistance to the royal will.

Example of it.

(28) L'Etoile, p. 31 and 32.
(29) Ibid. p. 42 and 43.
(30) Ibid. p. 63 and 64, and p. 91. Chron.

close

cloſe of his reign, as theſe compulſory exertions of arbitrary authority (31).

Provincial ſtates.

Beſides the States General and the Parliaments, there were other powerful obſtacles to the unlimited exerciſe of the prerogative. Many of the provinces enjoyed the right of holding their own ſtates, under the controul of the governor; and ſeem to have likewiſe poſſeſſed the faculty of laying on the particular taxes, requiſite for raiſing the ſums, demanded by the government (32). To be convinced of the weight and influence of the provincial aſſemblies, in controuling the inordinate abuſe of the royal power, we need only peruſe the requeſt; or rather, the remonſtrance; for ſuch it may be juſtly termed; preſented to Henry, in 1578, by the States of Burgundy, aſſembled at Dijon. It contains ſo ſevere a ſatyre on his adminiſtration, and ſpeaks a language ſo nervous, bold, and independant, that we are aſtoniſhed at its having been offered, or received. The delegates who carried it to the foot of the throne, demanded the reduction of the antient taxes, and the abolition of the new ones recently impoſed: they recapitulated the many acts of prodigality committed by Henry; and deſired that commiſſioners might be named, to aſcertain the extent of his debts, to cancel ſuch as were improperly contracted, and to liquidate thoſe which were juſt, and well authenticated. They propoſed, that the money neceſſary to be levied for diſcharging the incumbrances of the king, ſhould be put into the hands of commiſſioners, and faithfully applied to the purpoſe for which it was deſtined.

Their manly and generous remonſtrances.

Far from reſenting a ſpeech ſo uncourtly, Henry condeſcended to endeavour to mollify the delegates; diſmiſſed them with many promiſes; and actually

(31) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 729.

(32) Montluc. Comman. vol. iv. p. 6. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. 605—622.

exempted

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exempted the province of Burgundy from the payment of the new taxes (33). It may be justly questioned, whether any house of commons, during the reign of Elizabeth, would have dared to offer a similar remonstrance to that princess; and we may boldly affirm, that notwithstanding the apparent limits imposed on her prerogative by the existence of parliaments, she was, in effect, as arbitrary as the kings of France of the sixteenth century. In 1583, Henry made an experiment, which forcibly evinced the impotence of the royal authority, when applied to the pockets of his subjects. He sent persons of the first rank and consideration, through the provinces, to expose to the people his wants, and to demand pecuniary assistance. They met every where with peremptory refusals, accompanied by complaints and reproaches, against the profusion of the king (34).

Inability of the crown to extort money, on many occasions.

Amount of the revenues.

It is difficult to state with any degree of accuracy, the precise amount of the French revenue, under Henry the Third. The domain of the crown was still very considerable; though it is certain that, before 1587, alienations had been made from it, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the States General, to the extent of sixteen millions of livres, in value (35). We may estimate that sum as equal to seven hundred thousand pounds sterling. The sale of the crown lands, which had remained untouched and undiminished during near five centuries, from Hugh Capet to Louis the Eleventh; began under the reign of Charles the Eighth, when that prince, in 1494, commenced his invasion of Naples (36). Previous to the expulsion of the English from France, under Charles the Seventh, the French kings sub-

(33) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 729—731.
(34) Busbeq. letters 15 and 27. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 81.
(35) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 28.
(36) Memoires de Sully, vol. i. p. 430, 431.

sisted

fisted principally on their domains. Grants of money were only made on urgent occasions, for a limited time, which was usually short; and such could only be accorded, or levied, by the consent of the three orders of the States, who were solemnly convoked for the purpose. Strengthened by the accession of power, which he received from the conquest of so many provinces occupied by the English, Charles the Seventh ventured to impose a permanent and annual taxation on his people. It was, nevertheless, assessed with such moderation, that no resistance was experienced from them; its whole amount not exceeding a million, eight hundred thousand livres (37), or about eighty-five thousand pounds sterling. But, under his successor, Louis the Eleventh, the taxes were raised to above four millions, seven hundred thousand livres. Charles the Eighth, before his decease in 1498, augmented them to more than five millions, eight hundred thousand livres. Even in the following reign, under Louis the Twelfth, whose paternal affection for his subjects inclined him to diminish their burdens; the impositions continued rapidly to advance. He levied in 1514, seven millions, six hundred and fifty thousand livres (38). If a prince of such œconomy and benevolence, was necessitated to encrease the taxes, it may be naturally supposed, that Francis the First, profuse, magnificent, and continually engaged in expensive wars, could not fail to aggravate the evil. In fact, we find, that before the close of his reign, in 1547, he had more than doubled the amount of the sums levied by his predecessor. Francis raised them to fifteen millions, seven hundred thousand livres (39). Under Henry the Second, they were

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(37) Memoirs de Sully, vol. i. p. 427, 428.
(38) Ibid. p. 428.
(39) Id. ibid.

still

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ſtill progreſſive (40). But, a very conſiderable allowance muſt be made for the continual and rapid encreaſe in the price of all commodities, as well as for the diminution of the value of money, in conſequence of the diſcovery of America, between the year 1492, and 1560. It would be difficult to calculate, or eſtimate, the prodigious influx of gold and ſilver into Europe, after the commencement of the ſixteenth century.

In the year 1587, Henry the Third exacted thirty millions of livres, which were inſufficient to prevent his accumulating an enormous debt (41). Francis the Firſt, at the time of his deceaſe, in 1547, had paid off every incumbrance, and left near five millions of livres in his coffers: but, at the acceſſion of Charles the Ninth, within fourteen years afterwards, the debts of the crown fell little ſhort of three millions, five hundred thouſand livres (42), or one hundred and fifty thouſand pounds ſterling. They were encreaſed during his reign; and Ronſard, the poet, in his ſatyre of the "Dryade violée," pathetically laments, that the neceſſities of the king had compelled him to ſell a great part of the foreſts of the Vendomois. Among theſe, was the wood of Gaſtine, which Ronſard had conſecrated to the muſes (43). The civil wars, and the total miſmanagement or neglect of the finances which followed, plunged the revenue into inextricable confuſion, and added greatly to the embarraſſments of the ſtate. Henry the Third, in 1579, made an attempt to enquire into the ſtate of the domain lands, woods, waſtes, and other property of the crown, when he

Debts of the crown.

(40) Diſcours de la Noue, p. 359.

(41) About a million, two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds ſterling. Hiſt. des Troubles de France, p. 39.

(42) Traduction de l'Hoſpital, vol. ii. p. 19.

(43) Vie de Ronſard, p. 144.

named

named commiſſioners to viſit the provinces of France. The recovery, amelioration, and augmentation of the revenue, was the firſt, and moſt important object of the deputation; and powers, almoſt deſpotic and unlimited, were conferred on the members (44). How deplorable was the condition of the ſovereign, and how ruined were the finances at that period, we may learn, from Henry's expreſſions in the letters patent, or commiſſion, which he iſſued. He expreſsly enjoins the perſons deputed, to demand entrance into the aſſembly of the States, in ſuch provinces as enjoyed the privilege of governing themſelves by their repreſentatives. "You are then," continues the king, "to repreſent to them, in the "ſtrongeſt language poſſible, my neceſſities, ariſing "from the magnitude of the debts of the crown, "incurred before my acceſſion. They are ſo en-"creaſed, from the conſequences of the civil wars, "that all the domain is ſold and engaged; and "almoſt all the aids, taxes, and other revenues, "are alienated. The remaining receipts not being "equal to one-third of the expences, indiſpenſable "for the preſervation of the ſtate; I have been "conſtrained, of late years, to my great regret, "to make many edicts and engagements very "injurious, in order to raiſe the neceſſary ſupplies "for the ſupport of my houſehold, and the offices "of the kingdom (45)." It ſeems hardly poſſible to depicture a more calamitous ſtate of the revenue. If we compare it with the deficit, in 1787, at the time when Calonne, as ſuperintendant of the finances, adviſed Louis the Sixteenth to call together the "Notables," we ſhall ſee how infinitely the pecuniary embarraſſments of Henry the Third exceed-

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(44) Memoirs de Nevers, vol. i. p. 608—611.
(45) Ibid. p. 621, 622.

ed

CHAP. I. ed those of the late unfortunate and ill-fated sovereign.

Farmers general. The pernicious practice of employing farmers, or partizans, as they were then called, in every department of the revenue, completed the ruin of the kingdom. It is difficult to conceive the extent and magnitude of this evil, which swallowed up all the resources of France. In 1577, Henry the Third was so egregiously defrauded, that, from taxes which produced twelve millions of livres, only eight hundred thousand ever entered the treasury (46). The greater part of the farmers were not natives, but, Florentines and Savoyards, who glutted themselves with wealth, and usually returned to spend it in their own country. Catherine of Medicis, herself an Italian, had contributed exceedingly to spread the disorder, by employing foreigners, as receivers

Their numbers. or collectors of the revenue. So lucrative was the occupation, that people of all descriptions, noblemen, ladies, and members of the council, contrived to exercise it, and to participate in the general plunder (47). They were multiplied under Henry the Third, to such a degree, that Tavannes estimates them at thirty thousand (48). To render the calamity irremediable, they were accustomed to purchase of the king the new taxes, as soon as they came out, and to advance the money which it was calculated they might produce. But, as a recompense for prompt payment, the farmers

Sale of taxes. seldom laid down more than a fourth, and often not a sixth part of the sum, levied by imposition on the people. We may see, in the Memoirs of Sully, a list of persons who were concerned and interested in the tax upon salt, in 1585. The name of the

(46) Memoirs de Nevers, vol. i. p. 197.
(47) Villeroi, vol. iv. p. 412.
(48) Tavannes, p. 313.

duchess

ducheſs of Joyeuſe, ſiſter to Louiſa, wife of Henry the Third, is the firſt; and ſtands for no leſs a ſum, than ſeventy-five thouſand crowns. The aggregate amount of the money, thus advanced upon the mortgage of the duty on ſalt, exceeds a million, ſix hundred thouſand crowns (49). Villeroi mentions as a fact well known, that two pecuniary edicts, obtained of Henry the Third by his favorites, were ſold immediately afterwards to the financiers, for the ſum of twelve thouſand, and twelve thouſand, five hundred crowns. The former produced fifty thouſand; and the latter, ſixty thouſand crowns (50).

Grants of taxes to the courtiers.

Such was the facility and criminal prodigality of Henry the Third, that he did not bluſh to create taxes, which were excluſively meant to enrich his minions and ſervants. "It was common," ſays Villeroi, "to ſee ladies, gentlemen, even valets, "and perſons of the vileſt deſcription, ſhameleſsly "purſuing the verification of edicts which they had "obtained; ſoliciting their publication; recommending them as productive, and calling them "*their* edicts (51)." Abuſes could hardly be carried to a more aſtoniſhing point of indecency and enormity. The treaſurers, who had the power of diſtributing, and apportioning the taxes, or impoſitions, throughout the kingdom, committed equal violations of juſtice. In order to ſpare ſome villages, of which they, or their immediate relations and friends, were the proprietors, they exacted unequal and ſevere contributions from others, to the oppreſſion of the inferior claſſes of people. Numbers of wretched peaſants, unable to pay the ſums thus demanded, were thrown into dungeons, and devoured by vermin, or conſumed by diſeaſe (53).

Inequality of their diſtribution.

(49) Memoires de Sully, vol. i. p. 334.
(50) Villeroi, vol. iv. p. 413 and 414.
(51) Ibid. p. 412.
(52) Ibid. p. 408 and 409.

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Wealth of the financiers.

Coffé.

The prodigious fortunes, acquired by all thoſe, who had, in any degree, the controul or management of the finances under Charles the Ninth and Henry the Third, excite amazement and incredulity. Marſhal Coffé, who was raiſed to the poſt of ſuperintendant, by the former of thoſe princes, contrived in the courſe of only one year, to diſcharge a hundred thouſand crowns which he was indebted, and to lay by fifty thouſand crowns in reſerve. His wife avowed the fact to Catherine of Medicis, in the midſt of the court (53). Louis Adjacet, or Giacetti, a Florentine, and one of the contractors, or farmers general, amaſſed far greater wealth. He laid out a ſum adequate to ſixteen thouſand pounds of our money, for the caſtle and county of Chateau Vilain, in 1578, and married Mademoiſelle d'Atri, of an illuſtrious Neapolitan family, maid of honor to the queen-dowager. In addition to this landed property, he poſſeſſed rents or annuities, payable by the town-hall of Paris, to the amount of near forty thouſand livres, or about ſixteen hundred pounds ſterling, annually; and his furniture alone was eſtimated at an immenſe ſum. We may judge of the degree of intimacy and familiarity which ſubſiſted between him and Henry the Third, when we find that he frequently entertained the king at his own houſe, in the moſt ſumptuous manner; and that prince having ſeveral times ordered Adjacet to diſcharge a debt which he had incurred with a merchant, for pearls, to the amount of two thouſand crowns, the financier turned a deaf ear to the ſolicitation, and would not comply with Henry's requeſt (54).

Adjacet.

(53) Brantome, vol. i. p. 189 and 190.

(54) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de France, p. 99, and p. 131 and 132.

In

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In 1589, Molan, one of the treaſurers of France, having quitted Paris when the party of the League took poſſeſſion of the capital, concealed his wealth by burying a conſiderable part of it under his houſe. He joined the king in Touraine; but, under pretence of poverty, he conſtantly refuſed to advance to that monarch, any ſum, however ſmall, notwithſtanding the ſtate of diſtreſs, to which the crown was reduced. In his houſe at Paris, after a long ſearch, were diſcovered above a million of livres in ſpecie (55); which came moſt opportunely, to enable the duke of Mayenne to equip and pay his forces (56). Irritated at Molan's refuſal to aſſiſt him, when poſſeſſed of ſuch reſources, Henry cauſed him to be arreſted; and the unfortunate financier was glad to compound for his freedom and pardon, by the payment of fifteen thouſand crowns to the king (56).

Molan.

The alliances which the opulent contractors formed with the greateſt families in the kingdom, enſured their protection from reſearch and puniſhment. Very ample powers of inquiring, ſuſpending, and bringing to trial, all perſons who appeared to have defrauded the revenue, were entruſted to the commiſſioners, ſent in 1579, to diſcover abuſes. Collectors, controllers, receivers, and treaſurers, were rendered amenable to the tribunal, which inſtitution ſeemed to promiſe a beneficial change in the finances (57). But, in 1585, Henry compounded at once with all the treaſurers of France, and gave them a complete abolition of their paſt malverſations, exactions, and oppreſſions. For this act of grace and oblivion, they preſented him with only a hundred and twenty thouſand crowns; a ſum very in-

Impunity of the financiers.

(55) About forty thouſand pounds.

(56) Memoires de Baſſompierre, vol. i. p. 18. Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de France, p. 274.

(56) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 176. De Thou, vol. x. p. 605.

(57) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 608 and 609.

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adequate to the magnitude of their extortions, and which, at the same time, secured their future impunity. In order to levy the money, they imposed a contribution on the individuals composing their body; and Henry's necessities induced him gladly to accept a temporary aid, at the price of the felicity and property of his subjects (58).

Practice of funding.

The practice of funding was not unknown in France, under Henry the Third. That prince had contracted a debt of near a million and a half of pounds sterling, before the year 1577. Persons were found, who voluntarily advanced him sums of money, for which he gave them public security on the receipts of the revenue, or the domain (59). He paid them sixteen per cent. interest, and he even rejected the entreaties of the States, who exhorted him to break the contract, as usurious. Henry was the more meritorious in thus adhering to his engagements, as Philip the Second, king of Spain, had given him a recent example of the infraction of pecuniary faith, in his treatment of the Genoese, to whom he was indebted (60). Charles the Ninth borrowed money at twenty per cent (61). Yet, under Francis the First, a bank had been opened at Lyons, which lent money at only eight per cent (62). During the reign of that monarch, annuities had been granted, payable by and at the town-hall of Paris, for which the king was security. They subsisted under Henry the Third. Ten per cent. was the rate of interest paid to the holders, or lenders; and the majority of the inhabitants of the metropolis had scarcely any other property, or subsistance,

Interest of money.

Life rents.

(58) Tavannes, p. 313. Memoires pour ser. à l'Hist. de France, p. 191.
(59) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 925.
(60) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 231.
(61) L'Art de Ver. vol. i. p. 653.
(62) Ibid. p. 640.

independant

independant of their labour and profeſſions, than that derived from the payment of the rents of the town-hall (63). It was, therefore, a moſt ſerious calamity, when, on the king's being compelled, againſt his inclination, in 1585, to make war againſt the Hugonots, he ſuſpended the regular dividends, or payments (64). In order to ingratiate himſelf with the Pariſians, the duke of Guiſe, in the courſe of the ſhort negotiation which took place between him and the king, before the flight of the latter from the Louvre, in 1588; expreſsly propoſed, as one of the articles of accommodation, that an aſſignment ſhould be made on Henry's part, to ſecure the conſtant and certain payments from the town-hall (65). At the commencement of the war between the duke of Mayenne and Henry, in April, 1589, they were totally diſcontinued: but, ſuch was the frenzy of the time, and ſo great the deteſtation borne to the royal name and dignity, that all private loſſes or diſtreſſes were ſwallowed up and forgotten in the enthuſiaſm of rebellion (66).

Suſpenſion of their payment.

The coin of the kingdom, like every other inſtitution of civil government, was in a deplorable ſtate of confuſion or debaſement, during the reign of the two laſt princes of the houſe of Valois. In 1577, Henry the Third iſſued a celebrated edict, deſigned to regulate the value of the current money, and to reduce it nearly to its intrinſic weight. The cuſtom of eſtimating and reckoning by livres, an imaginary coin, was aboliſhed, on account of the inconveniencies ariſing from the fluctuation of its value. All effects were ordered to be eſtimated in ſales and contracts, by the ecu, or gold crown of three livres,

Edicts relative to the current coin.

(63) De Thou, vol. x. p. 598. Davila, p. 571.
(64) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 336. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 907.
(65) Davila, p. 695.
(66) De Thou, vol. x. p. 598.

which

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which from the firſt day of January enſuing, was to be taken at ſixty ſous, or thirty pence. They had previouſly riſen to nearly double that value, and were circulated in the common mercantile intercourſe, at five, and even at ſix livres, in ſome places. This edict was productive of the moſt beneficial conſequences to commerce (67). Previous to the acceſſion of Henry the Second, the effigy of the ſovereign was not engraven on the gold, or ſilver coin: but, in 1548, that prince cauſed it to be firſt ſubſtituted, inſtead of a croſs, which was more eaſily effaced. Soon afterwards, the year in which the piece of money was ſtruck; and the particular rank which the ſovereign held among thoſe of his own name, were added (68). Ecus, and teſtons, were the common money of France; but the doubloons and piſtoles of Spain were univerſally current (69).

State of the military force, before the acceſſion of Francis the Firſt.

Before the acceſſion of Francis the Firſt, in 1515, the French kings can ſcarcely be ſaid to have poſſeſſed any permanent, military force. The conqueſt of Naples, and the battle of Fornoua, under Charles the Eighth, were gained by the impetuoſity and valor of the cavalry, compoſed principally of nobility, who overbore the feeble and unwarlike Italians. Louis the Twelfth conquered the Milaneze, and beat the Venetians at Ghierra d'Adda, with troops formed upon ſimilar principles. But, when it became neceſſary to carry on war for ſeveral campaigns, in Flanders, Italy, and Germany, againſt the veteran, and formidable Spaniſh bands of the emperor Charles the Fifth; a new ſyſtem was adopted. The infantry, which antecedently had been neglected and deſpiſed, roſe into conſideration;

Infantry.

(67) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 531 and 532.
(68) L'Art de Ver. vol. iii. p. 644.
(69) Brantome, vol. iii. p. 199 and 202. vol. iv. p. 29.

though

though the cavalry ſtill continued to be the favorite ſervice for the young nobility. Nothing could be more groteſque and ſavage than the dreſs and appearance of the antient foot ſoldiers, under Charles the Eighth, in 1495. They wore their hair long and floating on their ſhoulders, in order to encreaſe the fierceneſs of their aſpect; together with ſhirts, which had large hanging ſleeves, and which they continued to wear for ſeveral months, without waſhing. It was a diſtinctive mark of their profeſſion to go without ſtockings, or, at leaſt, with one leg bare. Even the officers and captains adhered to this badge of the infantry (70). They commonly carried their ſtockings tied, or hanging at their girdles. As late as the time of Henry the Second, in 1552, when the foot ſoldiers were dreſſed and diſciplined in a much ſuperior manner; it was cuſtomary for the officers and private men to cut their ſtockings at the knee, when going to the aſſault of a town. As their dreſs, from the waiſt to the ankle, conſiſted only of one piece, it facilitated their ſcaling a wall, or mounting a breach (71).

Their dreſs, and appearance.

Croſs-bows, with which the infantry were principally armed, till the cloſe of the fifteenth century, fell then into diſuſe; and the arquebuſs was ſubſtituted in their place, when powder became common: but, the French foot were, for a long time, far from attaining dexterity in the uſe of fire-arms (72). Under Louis the Twelfth, no intermediate military rank, or title between a captain and a general, was yet invented. Colonels and quarter-maſters were unknown. The famous chevalier Bayard commanded a thouſand foot in 1507, as a ſimple captain. But, eight years afterwards, in 1515, at the battle of Marignan, under Francis the Firſt, Claude, count of Guiſe, is ſaid to have commanded ſix

Arms and weapons.

Military ranks.

(70) Brantome, vol. iv. p. 43—45. (71) Ibid. p. 46.
(72) Ibid. p. 50.

thouſand

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thousand German auxiliaries, as colonel (73). It was not before the year 1542, at the siege of Perpignan, that the office of colonel began to be generally known. Brissac was then created colonel of the French infantry (74).

Colonels.

Quarter-masters.

Quarter-masters were soon after instituted, in imitation of the Spaniards. Montluc was the first, in 1545, and the only one in all France, before the accession of Henry the Second, in 1547; after which period, others were successively named (75). Charles the Ninth, or, rather, Catherine of Medicis, in 1562, divided the office, and created three quarter-masters for the French infantry (76). They seem to have remained at that number, under Henry the Third.

Colonel-general of the infantry.

The employment of colonel-general of the French infantry, originated towards the close of the reign of Francis the First; and the celebrated Gaspard de Chatillon, better known as the admiral Coligny, was the second who ever occupied the situation (77). Even his enemies admitted, that to his wholesome severity, and excellent regulations, was due the discipline introduced among the foot. Before his appointment, they subsisted by pillage, rapine, and every sort of violence. To correct the evil, he made some terrible examples; and in 1552, when Henry the Second undertook the expedition against Mentz, Toul, and Verdun, the trees were covered with soldiers, hung upon the branches for infraction of orders, and excesses committed upon the peasants (78). But, the commencement of the civil wars, about ten years afterwards, was the term of their discipline; and it soon became impossible for either Catholics or Protestants to restrain the enormous depredations, murders, and profanations,

Contempt of discipline.

(73) Brantome, vol. iv. p. 50—57. (74) Ibid. p. 58.
(75) Ibid. p. 65 and 66. (76) Ibid. p. 85—87.
(77) Brantome, vol. iv. p. 220. (78) Ibid. p. 226.

committed

committed by the ſoldiery (79). Under Henry the Third, long habit had confirmed them, and rendered the evil almoſt irremediable. CHAP. I.

The principal cauſe, nevertheleſs, of theſe exceſſes, reſulted from the want of regular pay. During the whole of the ſixteenth century, and particularly, between 1560 and 1590, when the diſſentions of France impoveriſhed the crown, and exhauſted the treaſury, the army was frequently left unpaid for ſeveral months. The duke of Nevers ſeems to think, that ſoldiers who receive annually ten months pay, inſtead of twelve, have reaſon to be highly ſatisfied (80). The officers were equally deprived of their appointments; and the wretched people became the victims of the incapacity of the ſovereign to maintain the national forces (81). Even Philip the Second, though maſter of Peru, and poſſeſſing the treaſures of the New World, in addition to his vaſt revenues in Spain, Italy, and Flanders, left his troops continually in arrears; and ſaw the faireſt cities of the Netherlands deſolated or pillaged by his own ſoldiers, driven to deſperation from the detention of their pay (82). It cannot, therefore, excite wonder, that the kings of France ſhould be unable to defray the expence of the armies, which they were obliged to retain, in a time of univerſal inſurrection. How deplorable was the condition of the royal forces, employed againſt the Hugonots in Poitou, in December, 1588, we may ſee in the Memoirs of Nevers. "The men at arms," ſays he, "are not paid; "and their ſufferings are extreme, from the rigour "of the ſeaſon. Proviſions, and even bread, are

Want of pay.

Conſequences of it.

(79) Diſcours de la Noue, p. 572—575, and p. 643. Brantome, vol. iv. p. 133, and 137.

(80) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 196.

(81) Montluc's Comm. vol. iv. p. 185, and 311, and 312. Memoires de Caſtelnau, p. 240.

(82) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 368.

"wanting.

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"wanting. The greater part of the infantry are "without cloaths, ſhoes, or ſtockings; and the "men at arms ſay, that they are aſſembled for "their own deſtruction, not for that of the Pro-"teſtants (83)." To encreaſe the calamity, no proviſion or ſubſiſtence was allowed to the officers and ſoldiers, when age, wounds, and infirmities, had diſqualified them for active ſervice. Many, even among the former deſcription, at the ceſſation of a war, when a great proportion of the troops was diſbanded, either ſought foreign ſervice; or went over to the Turks, who gladly received them; or committed piracies on the ſeas; or, laſtly, embraced mechanical and mercantile profeſſions (84). Theſe laſt were, however, conſidered as degrading, by ſuch a conduct, the honorable profeſſion of arms.

The cavalry.

The cavalry was a far more ſplendid, expenſive, and faſhionable ſervice than the infantry, during the ſixteenth century. All the young men of the court ſerved in it by preference, and frequently at their own expence. Their armor, dreſs, and accoutrements were uſually ſuperb. When Strozzi brought a troop of two hundred horſemen to Francis the Firſt, equipped, mounted, and provided entirely at his own coſt, they were the admiration of the French monarch. Their helmets and corſlets were gilt, and every man had two horſes. Strozzi expended twenty-five thouſand crowns in forming this body, which he long continued to maintain without any aſſiſtance from the crown (85). During the reign of Henry the Second, when Savoy and Piemont were occupied by the French, that country was regarded as the ſchool for military education and improvement. The private ſoldiers became rich, by the plunder of the numerous towns and

Their dreſs and armor.

Riches acquired by plunder.

(83) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 874, 875.
(84) La Noue, p. 184.
(85) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 295—297.

caſtles,

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caſtles, captured from the enemy; and they laid out the money acquired by their valor, in decorations of every kind, ſuitable to their profeſſion. Fifty of them in one company had bonnets of red velvet, ornamented with gold; chains of the ſame metal round their necks, and velvet ſcarfs. A corporal, belonging to the colonel's own company, appeared at maſs, dreſſed in green ſattin, and having his drawers buttoned down to his ſhoes, with double ducats, angels, and nobles (86). All theſe marks of opulence diſappeared after the beginning of the civil wars, which produced general poverty, relaxation of diſcipline, and diſſolution of manners, not only among the ſoldiery, but, through every rank of ſociety (87).

Change introduced in military weapons,

The arms, offenſive, and defenſive uſed, by the troops, underwent a conſiderable change, between the acceſſion of Francis the Firſt, in 1515, and the death of Henry the Third, in 1589. Pikes, the antient weapon of the infantry, gave place to the arquebuſs: while, in the cavalry, lances were gradually and reluctantly changed for the piſtol. Tavannes, about the year 1567, contributed principally to the latter alteration (88). Corſlets were, likewiſe, in a great meaſure, abandoned by the infantry under Charles the Ninth (89). After the uſe of fire-arms became general, every part of defenſive armor was fabricated in a manner ſo maſſive, that it was impoſſible for the youngeſt, or moſt vigorous ſoldiers, long to ſuſtain its weight. Under Francis the Firſt, the oldeſt officers ſupported the fatigue of a whole day, completely armed: but, before 1580, it was accounted a great exertion to remain two

and in defenſive armor,

(86) Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 331.
(87) La Noue, p. 223.
(88) Tavannes, p. 307. La Noue, p. 275. Montluc, vol. iv. p. 293.
(89) La Noue, p. 317.

hours

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hours in a coat of mail (90). The art of deſtroying kept pace with the art of defending. Stuart, a Scottiſh gentleman, and a Hugonot, who is celebrated for having mortally wounded the conſtable Montmorenci; diſcovered a mode of fabricating balls of ſuch a compoſition, that ſcarcely any armor, however exquiſitely tempered, could reſiſt their force, when diſcharged from a piſtol. They were called "Stuardes," from the name of their inventor (91).

At the famous judicial combat, or duel, between Jarnac and La Chataigneraye, fought in 1547, under Henry the Second, the defenſive arms were firſt delivered to the two combatants, and afterwards the offenſive weapons, with the utmoſt ſolemnity, in preſence of the king, the conſtable, and the whole court (92). It excites aſtoniſhment, that under the preſſure of ſo vaſt a weight, they exerted ſuch agility and dexterity. Morions, or hemlets, which were univerſally worn at that period, fell much into diſuſe, before the end of Henry the Third's reign (93). The arquebuſs was the principal offenſive weapon, which decided the fate of battles in the ſixteenth century. D'Andelot firſt introduced them among the French infantry, about the middle of the reign of Henry the Second, on his return from Milan, where he had been detained during ſeveral years, a priſoner; and Strozzi, who become colonel-general of the infantry, in 1569, on D'Andelot's death, rendered them general. But as the beſt were fabricated at Milan, it was long before a ſufficient number could be procured to arm all the foot ſoldiers (94). Brantome expreſsly ſays, that the arquebuſs would kill,

offenſive arms.

Arquebuſſes.

(90) La Noue, p. 285 and 286.
(91) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 110.
(92) Le Labourer ſur Caſtel, vol. ii. p. 557 and 558.
(93) Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 299.
(94) Ibid. p. 290—296.

at

at the distance of four hundred paces (95). They were gradually supplanted by the musquet, which does not seem to have been known in France, before 1571, or the following year. To Strozzi was, in like manner, due their introduction; but, he found the utmost repugnance in effecting their reception among the troops. In order to overcome it, he himself, in 1573, at the siege of Rochelle, always had one carried by a page, or lacquey, wherever he went. His example soon vanquished, in a considerable degree, the reluctance of his men; more especially, when they saw him frequently kill even a horse, at five hundred paces distant, with a musquet (96). Henry, duke of Guise, likewise, by constantly using the same weapon, facilitated its progress among the troops. The principal objection to them was their weight, which so fatigued the soldier, that, among the Spaniards, every musqueteer was allowed a follower to carry it, during a march (97). CHAP. I. Musquets.

The first institution of guards, as distinct from the other forces, was due to Charles the Ninth, or to Catherine of Medicis, his mother; who, in 1563, formed one regiment, under the command of Charry, as quarter-master: they consisted of ten companies, and were, by the king's express direction, taken from under the controul or orders of the colonel-general of the infantry, in order to depend wholly and exclusively on the sovereign body-guard they constituted (98). In 1573, the same prince broke them; but, he issued directions to levy two companies anew, for his protection, in 1574; a short time before his decease (99). We find, from the Memoirs of the duke of Nevers, Guards. Their institution.

(95) Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 297.
(96) Ibid. p. 300. (97) Ibid. p. 302—304. (98) Ibid. p. 90.
(99) Ibid. p. 103 and 104.

that

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that in 1577, Henry the Third kept in regular pay twelve hundred Swiſs guards, two hundred archers, and a hundred gentlemen of his houſehold (100). Yet, ten years afterwards, it appears, that there were only about three hundred men in the regiment of guards, which uſually mounted at the palace of the Louvre, together with a few archers on horſe-back (101). In order more effectually to ſecure himſelf againſt the enterprizes of the League, he had, before that time, created the famous band of forty-five; ſo denominated from the number of which it was compoſed. They were all gentlemen by birth, of approved valor, and moſtly Gaſcons, recommended by the duke of Epernon. Henry never moved without them; gave them, each, a hundred crowns of gold monthly, beſides other gratifications; and entruſted his perſon entirely to their fidelity. During the night, they always were ſtationed in the anti-chamber of his apartment; and by their hands the duke of Guiſe was finally immolated to the reſentment of their maſter (102).

Band of forty-five.

The nobility ſerved from royalty.

During the courſe of the civil wars under the two laſt kings of the family of Valois, the nobility ſerved, in a great meaſure, on both ſides, either from loyalty, or zeal for their religion, or gratitude, or attachment to their reſpective leaders. Plunder ſupplied the want of regular pay, among the officers and men; who, inflamed by civil and religious animoſity to a pitch of frenzy, were raiſed above conſiderations of a pecuniary and mercenary nature. On the ſide of the Hugonots, incredible inſtances of this ſpirit might be adduced. We need only recollect the memorable one which took place in 1568, when the German auxiliaries came to the

Example of zeal and enthuſiaſm.

(100) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 189.
(101) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 652.
(102) Vie d'Epernon, vol. p. 283 and 284.

aſſiſtance

assistance of the prince of Condé. Those stipendiaries refused to join the Protestant army, notwithstanding the similarity of their faith, till they had received payment of fifty thousand crowns. The prince was destitute of money, and the greatest Hugonot nobles in his camp, had the utmost difficulty to provide a miserable, and precarious subsistence. In this extremity, Condé and Coligni having chearfully sacrificed all their plate and jewels, the example was imitated by the officers and soldiers. Even the pages and lacqueys tore the ear-rings from their ears, to augment the general mass; and a common footman had the incredible generosity to contribute ten crowns. By this means, a sum amounting to about four thousand pounds sterling, was raised, and immediately given to the Germans. No similar act of disinterestedness and enthusiasm is to be found in the most shining periods of Greece and Rome (103).

Military service, purely voluntary.

One natural and necessary consequence of the voluntary service performed by the nobility in the field, was, that they quitted the army at pleasure, and could never be retained long under the standard. No entreaties, nor commands, were sufficiently powerful to compel their stay, when fatigue, or business, or attention to their domestic concerns, called them to their castles. To cite proofs of this fact, would be to relate the history of every campaign. Even Coligni, whose ascendant over the Protestants, after the prince of Condé's death at Jarnac, was such as to approach to despotism; yet, could not cure an evil, inherent in the nature of the military profession: nor was the effect of victory itself sufficient to induce the conquerors to pursue their triumph. After the battle of Coutras, in 1587, gained by the king of Navarre over the duke of Joyeuse; instead of profiting of so signal an ad-

Instances of it.

(103 D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. i. p. 227 and 223.

vantage,

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vantage, that prince was instantly deserted by all the nobility of Poitou and Saintonge, who formed the principal strength of his forces. Far from marching, as he might be expected to have done, towards the Loire, he returned the very next day, into Gascony (104).

Infraction of capitulations.

A melancholy effect of the rancour subsisting between the Protestants and Catholics, during the course of the civil wars, was the continual infraction and shameless violation of the articles of capitulation, agreed on previous to the surrender of cities and garrisons. It would be endless to enumerate the examples of breach of faith, on both sides. Sometimes, the commanders themselves were either openly, or tacitly consenting to the plunder and massacre of the very enemy, to whom they had, a few hours or minutes preceding, granted and solemnly promised honorable conditions. More frequently, the brutal, and vindictive fury of the soldiers, was not to be restrained by any exhortations or commands. Among the great military characters of that period, Biron distinguished himself by his glorious and inflexible adherence to all his engagements with his enemies, and by his punishment of the slightest infraction of agreement. He gave a shining proof of it, at the surrender of St. John d'Angely in Poitou, in 1569, when the Protestant troops having capitulated, were pillaged by the Catholics, on quitting the town. Biron was no sooner informed of the outrage, than, drawing his sword, and rushing into the midst of his own men, who were occupied in plundering; he wounded numbers of them, and compelled the others to desist immediately from so scandalous a breach of honor and faith (105).

Conduct of Biron.

(104) D'Aub. Hist. Gen. vol. iii. p. 58. De Thou, vol. x. p. 19.
(105) Brantome, vol. iii. p. 364.

The

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The deliberate murders, committed after the close of battles, or sieges, in that age, reflect greater dishonor on the nation, as they were commonly perpetrated on defenceless men, wounded, disarmed, and delivered over to the vengeance of some implacable, or vindictive individual. Such must be esteemed the murder of Louis, prince of Condé, at Jarnac, after he had presented his gauntlet, and while he was actually sitting on the ground, between his two sureties (106). A circumstance which rendered it more atrocious, was, that Montesquiou, who shot the prince through the head from behind, commanded the Swiss guards of Henry, duke of Anjou, and neither received any punishment, nor even reprimand, for so odious a crime. Stuart who, at the battle of St. Denis, had killed the constable Montmorenci, being taken prisoner at Jarnac, was, in like manner, stabbed in cold blood, by the marquis of Villars, brother-in-law to the constable, as an offering to his manès. This act was performed almost in the presence of the duke of Anjou, who expressed his reluctance, but consented, after some delay, to its commission. Chatelier, another gentleman, made prisoner on the same day, was butchered by the friends of Charry, whom he had assassinated in Paris, some years preceding (107).

Acts of atrocity and cruelty.

Prince of Condé.

Stuart.

In retaliation for these cruelties, the Protestants, on their part, immediately put to death two persons of rank, the Baron d'Ingrande, and Prune, who had fallen into their hands, by the chance of war (108). Carreliere, a Protestant gentleman, made prisoner at the engagement of Dreux, in 1562, was tied to a walnut tree, and shot with pistol balls, by the Catholic soldiery (109). After the great victory

Retaliations.

Instances.

(106) D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. i. p. 280.

(107) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 110—112. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. i. p. 280.

(108) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 113.

(109) D'Aub. vol. i. p. 170.

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of Montcontour, in 1569, many of the Hugonot prisoners were massacred from wanton barbarity, or revenge. La Noue, who was one of the captives, owed his life only to the interposition of the duke of Anjou (110). Charbonniere, a private soldier, having shot the count de Briffac, from the walls of Mucidan, during the progress of the siege; was, on the surrender of the place, ordered to be immediately hanged (111). Richard the First and Saladin could not carry on war with greater inhumanity and ferocity. Even those laws which have been esteemed sacred among nations the least polished, were trampled on in France, during the reigns of Henry the Third, and his predecessor. Tavannes declares, that, when he besieged Auxonne, the inhabitants poisoned the wells and fountains. Not content with contaminating the water, they sent him a letter, dipped in the morbid matter of the plague, in order to spread the contagion in his camp (112). The historians of that age contain many similar attestations and instances of the most ferocious malignity. They contrast wonderfully with the magnanimous clemency and humanity, which characterised the reign of Francis the First, and Henry the Second. The duke of Guise's beneficent treatment of the sick and wounded soldiers of the emperor Charles the Fifth, after his repulse before Metz in 1553, was more glorious than his preceding success. During the civil wars, quarter was rarely given on either side.

Poison.

Uniforms were unknown among the troops in the sixteenth century: the private men seem to have enjoyed the liberty of dressing, and arming themselves, according to their capacity or fancy; but, the nobility were all distinguished by their peculiar colours,

(110) La Noue, p. 689.
(111) Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 418—420.
(112) Tavannes, p. 339.

during

during the civil wars. The Catholics wore crimſon jackets and ſcarfs: the Proteſtants were known by white ones (113). They are frequently called "Les Caſaques blanches." Henry the Third, in 1587, gave grey uniforms to the Swiſs guard, in alluſion to the colour, which he wore, himſelf, as a penitent of the order of the Hieronomites. The long continuance of hoſtilities, and the precarious intervals of repoſe, between 1562 and 1589, had rendered the nation univerſally acquainted with, and familiarized to, the uſe of arms. Even the peaſants, from neceſſity, more than choice, quitted the peaceable arts of huſbandry, and mixed in every fray. They were, unfortunately, victims to the rage of the ſoldiery, on many occaſions. Such was the fate of the Gautiers, in 1589. They were peaſants and labourers, who, driven to deſpair by the outrages of the royal forces, and by the ſeverity of the taxes, formed themſelves into a ſociety in Low Normandy, and were perſuaded to join the party of the League. Their numbers amounted to above ſixteen thouſand. We may judge to what a point of ferocity they had attained, and how much the oppreſſion which they experienced, had extinguiſhed in them all the emotions of humanity, by a circumſtance which De Thou commemorates. He ſays, that the Gautiers having made priſoner a royaliſt, who was occupied in pillage, they devoured him: no veſtige of his body was left; the women and children having drank the blood, while the men feaſted on the carcaſe (114). The horde was ſoon attacked by the duke of Montpenſier, who put three thouſand to the ſword, after a fierce reſiſtance. Four hundred were ſent to labour on the public works; and the remainder, compelled to ſurrender at diſ-

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Familiarity with the uſe of arms.

Oppreſſion of the peaſants.

Gautiers.

Deſtruction of them.

(113) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 140. and p. 143.
(114) De Thou, vol. x. p. 600.

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cretion, were allowed to return to their original occupation of tilling the earth (115).

Maſſacres of the peaſants.

After the defeat of Mouvans, a Hugonot commander, by Briſſac, in 1568; the peaſants of Perigord, in which province the action happened, cut in pieces a greater number of the fugitive Proteſtants, than had even fallen in the engagement. Coligni took an exemplary vengeance on them, for their attachment to the Catholics, Brantome declares, that in the caſtle of Chapelle Faucher, not a league from his own reſidence at Brantome, two hundred and ſixty were maſſacred in one room, by Coligni's expreſs orders; they had been detained a day in confinement, and the act was a deliberate one. He adds, that on his taking the liberty to remonſtrate with Coligni, becauſe the peaſants whom he had cauſed to be put to death, were not the ſame who had ſlaughtered the Proteſtants; he replied, that it was of no conſequence, ſince they were of the ſame province; and that the example would operate as a warning to their comrades (116).

Facility of raiſing troops.

In a country which had been ſo long the ſcene of war, it was not difficult to raiſe troops: every inhabitant of a village might be regarded as a ſoldier; and ſuch was the facility of levying them, that we find, in 1589, Thoré, brother to Henry de Montmorenci, procuring five hundred able and warlike peaſants, in the ſpace of a few hours. They were all vaſſals of the family and duchy of Montmorenci, and marched inſtantly to garriſon the city of Senlis, againſt the attack of the army of the League (117). It is difficult to aſcertain the amount of the French military force under Henry the Third. In 1577, marſhal Coſſé, in the council of ſtate, aſſerted, that there were a hundred and fifty compa-

(115) De Thou, vol. x. p. 600—603. Davila, p. 796—799.
(116) Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 225.
(117) Le Labour. ſur Caſtel. vol. ii. p. 749.

nies

nies of men at arms in the kingdom, which, together with the archers, compoſed a body of twenty thouſand, three hundred, and ſixty-five men. "This "army," ſaid he, "is ſufficiently numerous, to "engage the largeſt foreign force, which ever "yet entered France." He, however, exhorts the king to form a ſeparate body of ſix thouſand Switzers (118). The ſcience of fortification, in the modern acceptation of that term, was totally unknown in the ſixteenth century; and it was reſerved for the age of Louis the Fourteenth to re-model the Gothic towers and battlements of cities and caſtles. The moſt perfect production of the art, to be found in Europe, in the times of which we are treating, was the citadel of Antwerp, conſtructed by order of the duke of Alva, at an incredible expence. Mentz was accounted the ſecond, and coſt above forty thouſand pounds ſterling. The citadel of Turin was eſtimated to have coſt near one hundred and fifty thouſand crowns (119).

Science of fortification.

Under Henry the Third, the uſe, and practice of artillery, was not advanced beyond its infancy. D'Etrées, who occupied the poſt of maſter-general of the ordnance in 1558, at the ſiege of Calais, by Francis, duke of Guiſe; and who eminently contributed to its capture, was the firſt perſon among the French, who made any conſiderable progreſs in the conſtruction of batteries. Anterior to D'Etrées, continual accidents took place, from the burſting of cannon; and it was cuſtomary to cool them with vinegar, in order to prevent thoſe misfortunes (120). Armies were ſlenderly provided with artillery, which was conſidered as more requiſite for ſieges, than indiſpenſable in the operations of the field. In 1562, when Louis, prince of Condé,

Artillery.

Slender proviſion of that article, in armies.

(118) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 252.
(119) La Noue, p. 335.
(120) Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 223.

marched

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marched to inveſt Paris, he had only eight pieces of cannon, though his forces amounted to eight thouſand infantry, and five thouſand cavalry (121). At the ſiege of Chartres, in 1568, by the ſame general, he poſſeſſed no more than five battering cannon, and four light culverins (122). Even the duke of Anjou, commanding the royal army, which, in the ſubſequent year, gave battle to the Hugonots, and defeated them, at Jarnac, had only four cannon, and four culverins, with ſufficient ammunition to fire them between two and three hundred rounds (123). Elizabeth, queen of England, ſent, as a moſt ample and acceptable ſupply of artillery, to the prince of Condé, a ſhort time preceding, ſix cannon, with powder and ammunition. It was done at the earneſt ſolicitation of cardinal Chatillon, the Hugonot embaſſador; and Condé, grateful for the preſent, but unable to repay it in money, made a remittance to the queen, in bells, taken from the churches, and in wool (124).

Numerous examples:

In the army of Coligni.

When Coligni laid ſiege to Poitiers, a city ſeveral miles in circumference, and ſtrongly fortified, he had, in his whole camp, ſcarcely more than thirteen battering cannon, beſides culverins. His want of artillery was fatal to the ſucceſs of the enprize (125). At the memorable battle of Montcontour, the royaliſts were much ſuperior to their enemies in this reſpect. They had ſeventeen pieces of cannon: Coligni, only ſix (126). But, when that illuſtrious commander re-appeared at Arnai le Duc, in the enſuing year, 1570, and made an ad-

(121) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 163.
(122) La Noue, p. 633.
(123) Ibid. p. 670. Tavannes, p. 27.
(124) Memoires de Caſtelnau, p. 228.
(125) La Noue, p. 681. Memoires de Caſtelnau, p. 246.
(126) Memoires de Caſtelnau, p. 253. Tavannes, p. 356.—This latter author makes the diſparity leſs conſiderable: he ſays, that the royal army had fifteen cannon; the Hugonots, eleven.

vantageous

vantageous peace with Charles the Ninth, he was deſtitute of even a ſingle piece of artillery, of any ſize or deſcription (127). Henry the Third, writing to his embaſſador in England in 1577, ſpeaks of the train of battering cannon, which the duke of Alençon, his brother, conducted with him, at the head of the royal forces, as ſufficient to reduce any town to obedience. It conſiſted of eighteen cannon, and ſix large culverins (128). We may judge of the uſual proportion of artillery furniſhed in that age, by the terms of agreement between Henry, prince of Condé, and the count palatine, John Caſimir, in 1575. It was ſtipulated, that to an army of eight thouſand Germans, and ſix thouſand Switzers, ſhould be joined four large pieces of cannon, and twelve field-pieces, with ſuitable ammunition (129). Two years afterwards, in 1577, when the duke of Nevers exhorted Henry the Third to ſet on foot an army of ſix thouſand infantry, two thouſand, four hundred Switzers, and five hundred men at arms, beſides twelve hundred cavalry; he propoſed to join to that military force, as a juſt proportion of artillery, eight cannon, and twelve culverins (130). Eight hundred, or a thouſand pioniers, were to be attached to the artillery. The monthly expence, including every article, ordinary and extraordinary, requiſite to maintain an army of ſuch magnitude, he eſtimates at only two hundred and fifty thouſand livres a month, or about one hundred and twenty thouſand pounds a year. It is not without aſtoniſhment, that, at the battle of Coutras, in 1587, we find the duke of Joyeuſe had only two cannon. The Hugonots were ſuperior in artillery; for, they were maſters of two cannon and

Further proofs of the aſſertion.

(127) Mem. de Caſtel. p. 265. La Noue, p. 701.
(128) Le Labour. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 506.
(129) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 289.
(130) Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 189—191.

a culverin,

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a culverin, which being placed on an eminence, did signal ſervice, and contributed greatly to the victory obtained by the king of Navarre (131). The largeſt battery of cannon, directed againſt any place, during the civil wars, ſeems to have been that which marſhal Matignon opened upon the town of St. Lo, in Normandy, in 1574. It conſiſted of eighteen cannon, and five great culverins (132). But, Brantome ſays, that the moſt furious, and well-ſuſtained fire ever remembered by the oldeſt officer, was kept up from thirty-ſix pieces of cannon, againſt Ivoy in Flanders, when Francis duke of Guiſe commanded the forces of Henry the Second, in 1552 (133).

Petards.

To the period of the civil wars, is due the invention of petards. They were firſt uſed by the Hugonots, in 1580, at the ſiege of Cahors, in Quercy; and they produced an effect proportionate to their novelty and violence (134). Montelimar, and Embrun in Dauphiné, were taken by Leſdiguieres, in 1585, principally by means of petards (135). Red-hot balls, which have been revived ſince 1782, at Gibraltar, were uſed by marſhal Matignon, during the ſiege of La Fere, in 1580 (136).

Ranſoms.

Ranſoms formed a very ſerious and lucrative object of attention, in that age. To the captors, they proved the means of enriching themſelves and their families: the captured were frequently impoveriſhed and exhauſted, by the neceſſity of raiſing large ſums, to procure their freedom. The prodigious prices, ſet on the enlargement of perſons of eminence, excite aſtoniſhment. At the ſtorm of

Their vaſt amount.

(131) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. iii. p. 52. Sully, vol. i. p. 59.
(132) Letter of Cath. of Medicis, in the third vol. of Le Lab. ſur Caſt. p. 411.
(133) Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Etrang. p. 265 and 266.
(134) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 376.
(135) Ibid. vol. ix. p. 404 and 405.
(136) Pere Daniel, cited in L'Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 655.

Terouenne

Terouenne by the troops of Charles the Fifth, in 1553, Francis de Montmorenci, eldeſt ſon of the conſtable, was made priſoner on the breach. Twenty-five thouſand crowns were exacted for his releaſe (137). The liberty of Gabriel de Montmorenci, fourth ſon to the conſtable, taken captive at the age of fourteen, in the battle of St. Quintin, was fixed at ten thouſand crowns (138); and that of the duke of Longueville, at forty thouſand (139). Lord Grey, who commanded in the caſtle of Guiſnes near Calais, when it fell into the hands of the French, in 1558, was given to marſhal Tavannes, to recompenſe him for his exertions in the capture of the place. He carried his priſoner to Dijon in Burgundy, and did not releaſe him till lord Grey had paid five thouſand crowns (140). Brantome complains, that his family eſtate had been very conſiderably diminiſhed by the neceſſity of ranſoming his elder brother, taken by the Spaniards, at Heſdin, in Picardy, in 1553 (141). When we reflect, that private gentlemen ſerved, in a great meaſure, at their own expence, or on a very precarious pay; and that, in caſe of being made priſoners, they were reduced to purchaſe their freedom by the ſale of their property; we muſt allow, that a very high ſenſe of loyalty and honor exiſted among that body of men. It cannot excite ſurprize, that the profeſſion of arms was conſidered as more honorable than any other. The officers of high rank, taken in war, belonged

Impoveriſhment, cauſed by them.

(137) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 350.
(138) Ibid. p. 85.
(139) Ibid, p. 656
(140) Tavannes, p. 203.—This fact cannot reaſonably be doubted, ſince Tavannes relates it himſelf. It is, however, very ſingular, that Brantome expreſsly declares, that lord Grey was given by the duke of Guiſe, to Strozzi; who obtained only four thouſand crowns for his releaſe, which were paid him by the count de la Rochefoucault, who had been made priſoner at the caſtle of St. Quintin, and whoſe ranſom had been fixed at that ſum. Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 298.
(141) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 157 and 158.

always

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Profit, derived from ranſoms.

always to the commander in chief, as of right: inferior perſons were retained by thoſe, into whoſe hands they chanced to fall. Common ſoldiers frequently grew rich by theſe prizes. It was even cuſtomary for the general to purchaſe priſoners of his own men, at low ſums; and afterwards to ſet their ranſoms at very exorbitant ones. Philibert Emanuel, duke of Savoy, commanding the armies of Philip the Second, king of Spain, did not diſdain this ſpecies of traffic; and he acquired not only glory, but profit, by his celebrated victory at St. Quintin, where ſo many illuſtrious captives fell into his poſſeſſion (142).

A ſtriking proof, and which places in a conſpicuous point of view, the manners of the age, relative to captives, taken in war, is to be found in the writings of Ambroſe Paré. Monſieur de Baugé, ſays he, brother to the count de Martigues, had been made priſoner by two Spaniſh ſoldiers, at Terouenne, in 1553. Vaudeville, governor of Gravelines, having ſeen him, conceived an opinion, that he was a man of rank. To ſatisfy himſelf on a point of ſuch importance, he cauſed Baugé's ſtockings to be taken off; and remarking that his ſocks were neat, and his feet extremely clean, he became confirmed in his original apprehenſion. He, therefore, purchaſed him of the two ſoldiers, for fifteen crowns; who, being unable to maintain their priſoner, and ignorant of his quality, gladly accepted the ſum offered. Baugé ſtudiouſly concealed his name and condition, and patiently endured every hardſhip; ſleeping on ſtraw, and ſubſiſting on bread and water. Vaudeville ſoon afterwards tranſmitted to him a liſt of the French killed at the capture of Heſdin by the Spaniards; and on reading his brother's name among them, his grief ſurmounted his prudence. He burſt into

(142) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 157 and 158.

involuntary

involuntary tears and exclamations, which were heard by his guards; who no ſooner diſcovered the connexion between him and the count de Martigues, than they apprized Vaudeville of the value of his prize. By order of that officer, Baugé was immediately removed to an apartment hung with tapeſtry; he was ſerved with delicacy, and ſeven thouſand five hundred crowns were demanded for his ranſom. On his pleading inability to raiſe ſo conſiderable a ſum, Vaudeville obſerved, that it was poſſible he might not procure his freedom at a price ſo reaſonable; and the event juſtified the prediction. Mary, queen of Hungary, governeſs of the Low Countries, and the duke of Savoy, having been informed that a perſon of his quality was in Vaudeville's poſſeſſion, they diſpatched a meſſenger to him, to command that Baugé ſhould be forthwith delivered up to them; adding, that the morſel was too large for him, and that he had captives ſufficient beſides. Baugé's ranſom was immediately raiſed to twenty thouſand crowns (143).

Animoſity of the civil wars.

Frequently, animoſity, or revenge, more powerful even than intereſt, induced the captors to put to death on the ſpot, an enemy who was obnoxious, though he offered great ranſom. This circumſtance was peculiarly characteriſtic of the civil wars, when mutual rancour had extinguiſhed humanity, and even ſuſpended the love of gold itſelf. At Coutras, though the duke of Joyeuſe offered fifty thouſand crowns for his life, and threw down his ſword, he was ſhot dead immediately (144). The king of Navarre gained univerſal applauſe and popularity on that occaſion, by diſmiſſing the greater part of the Catholic gentlemen, who fell into his hands, without exacting, or accepting any ranſom (145).

(143) Œuvres de Paré, p. 794.
(144) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. iii. p. 56.
(145) Ibid. p. 56 and 57.

Such

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Such acts of renunciation and generosity were, by no means, common. The cruelties, exercised by the Spaniards, when they captured Hesdin, in 1553, in order to extort ransoms, can neither be perused without commiseration, nor related without wounding decency. The enormity of their conduct was greatly augmented, by the violation of the terms of surrender, which guaranteed to the French their lives. But, no articles of capitulation could restrain the ferocity, and mercileſs avidity of the Spanish soldiery. Those whom they did not stab, or massacre, were only reserved for more humiliating and lingering torments, of a nature too shocking to be described. Paré, who was an eye-witness to the facts, and who narrowly escaped with his life and liberty, gives a most affecting detail of every circumstance. It strongly paints the inveterate animosity, and savage fury, by which the most polished European nations, when at war with each other, were actuated and inflamed, in the sixteenth century (146).

Nature and composition of armies, in that century.

Francis the First, and Henry the Second, during their foreign wars, maintained very numerous armies, on a permanent footing. But, under the two last kings of the house of Valois, when their revenues were alienated or squandered, and when civil dissension depressed the throne, forces were only raised, and retained for a short time. The whole kingdom was in arms; but, the regular troops were few. The nobility led their retainers to the particular standard, which they chose to follow by preference. It became, under Henry the Third, an object of royal and ministerial contemplation, to change the nature of military service, and to commute, for a sum of money, the obligation, imposed on the vassal to attend his lord armed in the field.

(146) Œuvres de Paré, p. 791.

The

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The duke of Nevers calculates, that by excluding all the holders of fiefs, who were bound on the publication of the "Arriere Ban," throughout France, to appear in arms, on paying an equitable fine to the crown, above twenty thouſand pounds might be eaſily and ſpeedily raiſed (147). Foreign auxiliaries from almoſt all the countries of Europe, compoſed a principal part of the ſoldiers on either ſide. Italians, Walloons, Spaniards, Switzers, Engliſh, and Germans, fought for one, or the other party. Even the Scots were deſirous of taſting the pay, and plunder of France. In 1577, eighteen hundred Scots, who had ſerved in Holland, and in Denmark, anxious for employment, offered their ſervices to Henry the Third. James the Sixth, then a minor, does not ſeem, either by himſelf, or by his miniſters, to have been acquainted with, or conſulted in the tranſaction. Colonel Balfour, on the part of himſelf and his men, made the offer to Henry. That prince declined it, not without many acknowledgments (148).

Army of Henry the Third, how compoſed.

The largeſt army, ſeen during his reign, in France, was in 1589, when he beſieged Paris, with near forty thouſand troops. Of the number, fourteen thouſand were Switzers and Germans, conducted by Sancy. Near four thouſand, principally Proteſtants, were commanded by, and in the immediate employ of the king of Navarre. Epernon had brought to his maſter, a body of ſix thouſand foot, and twelve hundred horſe, raiſed at his own expence (149). The dukes of Montpenſier, and Longueville, Givry, and many other noblemen, or gentlemen, led their retainers (150). But, this numerous body of forces, was not belonging to the

(147) Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 193 and 194.
(148) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 512.
(149) Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 322.
(150) Davila, p. 813.

crown:

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Naval force. The French kings can ſcarcely be ſaid to have poſſeſſed any navy, before the reign of Francis the Gallies. Firſt; the gallies of Louis the Twelfth which were ſtationed at Marſeilles, being only calculated for the protection of the coaſt, or for expeditions of ſhort duration. During the former part of Francis's reign, while the celebrated Andrew Doria commanded the marine, at the time that Genoa was ſubject to the French crown; they maintained a ſuperiority in the Mediterranean, over the naval forces of the emperor Charles the Fifth. But, after the Negotiation of Poulin, at the Porte. defection of Doria, and the revolt of Genoa in 1528, Francis having loſt his aſcendant, had recourſe to an expedient, which rendered him odious to all Europe. He diſpatched Poulin, a man who had riſen by his merit and capacity in the marine, as embaſſador to Solyman the Second, emperor of the Turks, to negotiate for the junction of the Ottoman fleet with that of France. After ſurmounting many obſtacles, Poulin ſucceeded in the object of his miſſion. Barbaroſſa, in 1543, at the head of a Barbaroſſa joins the French fleet. hundred and ten gallies, coaſted the ſhore of Italy; arrived in the harbour of Marſeilles; and having ſailed from thence with the French fleet and forces, they laid ſiege to Nice. Notwithſtanding their ſu-

(151) De Thou, vol. x. p. 577.

periority,

periority, they were repulsed from before the castle; and Francis derived little benefit from an alliance so generally reprobated by the Christian powers (152). To recompence the zeal and ability of Poulin, he was raised, in the following year, to the rank of captain-general of the gallies; and he is commonly known in history, by the title of Baron de la Garde. In letters patent, issued on the occasion, the French navy is stated to consist of "gallies, fusts, brigan-"tines, and round vessels (153)." It is difficult to ascertain with certainty, their number, or force; but, we may rate the gallies below thirty, as only twenty-six, under command of the count d'Enghuien, joined Barbarossa in the expedition against Nice, when every effort was exerted to swell the French marine (154).

Creation of a captain-general of the gallies.

The war continuing between Francis the First and Henry the Eighth, La Garde conducted the fleet, composed of gallies and round vessels, through the straits of Gibraltar, across the Bay of Biscay, into the English channel. He even ventured to attack, in the month of August, 1545, the English fleet, stationed off the Isle of Wight; and, having, by the nautical skill of his evolutions, deprived them of the advantage resulting from a northerly wind, he extricated himself with honor, and sunk one of the largest ships of the enemy (155). It is probable that this was the first attempt made by any European power, to navigate gallies from the Mediterranean, across a portion of the Atlantic, into the northern seas; and it proves equally the progress of navigation, and the naval ability of the French commander. Encouraged by his predecessor's success,

Nautical skill and exploits of Poulin.

(152) Guichenon, Hist. de Savoye, vol. i. p. 651.
(153) Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 10.
(154) Guichenon, vol. i. p. 651.
(155) Hume's Hist. of England, vol. iv. p. 250. Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 12.

Henry

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Henry the Second, ſoon after his acceſſion, in 1547, diſpatched Leo Strozzi, one of the moſt ſkilful mariners of the ſixteenth century, with only ten gallies, to the coaſt of Scotland (156). The French marine was at its higheſt point, towards the termination of that monarch's reign; when, the grand prior, brother to Francis, duke of Guiſe, commanded at one time, upwards of forty gallies, well manned, armed, and equipped for battle (157). Under the three laſt princes of Valois, as the inteſtine troubles of the kingdom augmented, the navy ſunk, into neglect. Francis the Second, it is true, ſent ſome gallies to the aid of Mary of Guiſe, queen regent of Scotland, in 1560; and three years afterwards, Charles the Ninth diſpatched fifteen, to co-operate with the Spaniſh forces of Philip the Second, in the reduction of the Mooriſh fortreſs of Penon de Velez, on the coaſt of Morocco (158). But, theſe exertions were only temporary; and the French marine, in common with every other national, or public inſtitution, declined, from the exhauſted ſtate of the revenues. When it became requiſite, in 1572, to block up the port of Rochelle, in order to prevent ſupplies from being thrown into the place, while it was inveſted by land; the king, beſide ſending thither all his gallies, equipped eight "round veſſels (159)." They were ſo denominated from their circular conſtruction forwards, in contradiſtinction to the gallies, and other prowed veſſels, which were ſharp in the ſtern.

State of the French marine, under Henry the Second.

Its decline under his ſucceſſors.

Equipment of ſquadrons for the protection of trade.

Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, fitted out, at different times, during the courſe of their reigns, ſquadrons of armed ſhips, for the protection of trade;

(156) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 357 and 358.
(157) Ibid. p. 396 and 397.
(158) Ibid. Cap. Etran. p. 36 and 37.
(159) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 267.

particularly, in the Engliſh channel, which ſwarmed with pirates, or unauthorized and expatriated banditti, who plundered and interrupted all navigation. Elizabeth appears to have afforded them conſtant, though indirect, and concealed protection (160). In 1575, Henry the Third equipped, from the ports of Normandy and Brittany, twelve ſhips, for the purpoſes above-mentioned; but, he did it with every precaution, to prevent the alarm which, he apprehended, the queen of England might take, at ſuch a meaſure (161). When the duke of Mayenne beſieged Brouage, on the coaſt of Poitou, in 1577, the royal forces by ſea amounted to eighteen round veſſels, excluſive of the gallies, and tenders, or victuallers. The ſhips of war were fitted out from Bourdeaux (162). But, the moſt conſiderable naval equipment, made by Henry, or, rather by Catherine of Medicis, in whoſe name it acted; was the fleet which ſailed to the iſlands of the Azores, in 1582, for the purpoſe of reducing them to the obedience of Don Antonio, titular king of Portugal. It quitted the river Garonne, under the command of Philip Strozzi, and conſiſted of thirty ſhips, and twenty-five pataches (163.) No French gallies durſt undertake ſo diſtant and perilous a voyage upon the Atlantic: while, as a proof of the ſuperior nautical ſkill of the Spaniards in that age, the marquis Santa Croce had, in his fleet, no leſs than twelve gallies. It was certainly the firſt effort of the ſort; and would be regarded, even in the preſent age, when navigation has attained to ſuch a degree of perfection, as a bold and hazardous experiment (164).

Expedition to the Azores.

Superiority of naval ſkill of the Spaniards.

(160) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 299, and p. 390.
(161) Ibid. p. 458.
(162) D'Aub. vol. ii. p. 300. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 511. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 512.
(163) D'Aub. vol. ii. p. 466. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 581.
(164) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 58.

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Comparison of the fleets of the two nations.

The disparity between the naval force of France and Spain, is not less striking. Santa Croce commanded twenty large ships, of which the "St. Philip" alone might have encountered the whole fleet of Strozzi. She was a floating castle, of astonishing height, and eighteen hundred tons burthen; proportionably manned and armed. The largest vessel in Strozzi's squadron, on board of which he hoisted his flag, was only of six hundred tons; and he was obliged to quit her before he commenced the engagement with the Spaniards, as she was a very slow sailer, and unmanageable. The second ship, in which he actually ventured to attack the "St. Philip," was only of two hundred tons. Another difference, still more important, if possible, between the fleets of the two nations, was, that Philip the Second's vessels were all, in the strict sense of the term, men of war, built in the royal docks, at Seville; whereas, it would seem, that the far greater part of Henry's, were merchant vessels, hired expressly for the expedition (165). We can hardly be astonished, after considering these circumstances, that the issue of the enterprize was unfortunate to the French. It is difficult to form any estimate of the number of sailors who navigated Strozzi's fleet; or, of the amount of seamen which France could furnish in that age.

Jurisdiction of the general of the gallies.

The appointment of general of the gallies was equally honourable and extensive in its jurisdiction, though subordinate to the higher dignity of admiral of France: but, the latter was frequently only a simple title; whereas the former was a laborious, dangerous, and efficient office. He appears to have possessed considerable power, and to have decided by his supreme authority, in a summary manner, all

(165) D'Aub. Hist. vol. ii. p. 466—468.

questions

queſtions reſpecting prizes and captures (166). The ſalary annexed to the employment by Francis the Firſt, was ample; being no leſs than five hundred livres, or above twenty pounds a month (167). Such was the elevation of mind, which diſtinguiſhed the baron de la Garde, that, when at eighty years of age, and laboring under the ſymptoms of a mortal and incurable diſeaſe, Catherine of Medicis offered him the ſum of fifty thouſand crowns to reſign his poſt, he had the magnanimity to decline it, and to prefer dying captain-general of the gallies. His death was correſpondent with his other actions: the phyſicians having announced to him his diſſolution as imminent and inevitable, he cauſed himſelf to be raiſed, placed in a chair, with his ſword drawn in his hand, and ſoon afterwards expired in that attitude. The obſcurity of his birth and origin rendered the heroiſm of his character more extraordinary. His parentage was ſo low, and ſo uncertain, as to baffle enquiry (168).

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Salary.

Heroiſm of Poulin.

To La Garde was due the honor of ſome eſſential improvements and ameliorations in the mode of building and navigating gallies. We may judge of their materials and durability, from the inſtance of the "Reale," or admiral galley, conſtructed by him, which continued to keep the ſea above thirty years (169). The greateſt magnificence was diſplayed by the captains-general, in the decorations, ornaments, and other appendages of their veſſels. The examples given by contemporary writers, and eye-witneſſes, excite admiration. When, in 1573, a negociation of marriage was opened between Elizabeth, queen of England, and the duke of Anjou,

Durability of the gallies.

Their magnificence.

(166) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 387.
(167) Le Lab. ſur. Caſt. vol. ii. p. 11—13.
(168) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 387 and 388.
(169) Ibid. p. 384.

CHAP. I. afterwards Henry the Third; it advanced ſo far, that orders were iſſued to hold the gallies in readineſs for tranſporting the prince to London. They were at that time before Rochelle, occupied in blocking up the harbour of the place. On receiving the intimation, La Garde made every preparation for convoying the duke, in a manner ſuitable to his high rank, and to the ſplendor of the occaſion. He is ſaid to have expended ten thouſand crowns of his own fortune, in fitting up the admiral galley. All the ſlaves, who rowed her, were provided with jackets of crimſon velvet, to be worne on their entry into the Thames. The ſtate-room, or great cabbin, and the poop of the galley itſelf, were hung with the ſame materials, embroidered in gold and ſilver, having a Greek motto or device on the awning, which ſignified, that "however blown "about and agitated, I have never fallen, or "changed." The alluſion was natural and obvious, to the fidelity and loyalty, evinced by La Garde, during a long life, checquered by many misfortunes and diſgraces. The beds, furniture, benches, ſtreamers, and flags, were either covered with, or compoſed of, velvet and damaſk in equal proportions, fringed with gold, or ſilver. All theſe ſuperb preparations were rendered uſeleſs, by the rupture of the propoſed marriage (170).

Splendor of the admiral galley.

Individuals appear to have poſſeſſed and exerciſed, in the ſixteenth century, the right of fitting out, in time of peace, naval expeditions, at their own coſt, without any leave obtained from the ſovereign; and the object of which was either trade, or conqueſt, as accident and circumſtances might determine. The only meaſure requiſite to be obſerved, was, not to attack allies or confederates of the crown, to which

Naval expeditions fitted out by private individuals.

(170) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 385—387.

the

the adventurer owned allegiance. Henry the Third seems to acknowledge and admit this principle in all its extent, as equally juſt and generally recognized (171). Under Charles the Ninth's reign, a ſon of marſhal Montluc, having heard that great wealth was to be acquired on the coaſt of Africa, between Cape Blanco and the Cape of Good Hope; determined to ſhare in theſe ſuppoſed riches. Regardleſs either of the papal donation, or, of the long poſſeſſion acquired by the Portugueze; he publickly equipped two veſſels in the river Adour, employed ſix months in compleating their compliment of men, and ſailed from Bourdeaux. Arriving at Madeira, and being refuſed refreſhments by the governor, who had received intimation from his court, of the deſign of Montluc; the French landed, attacked, and carried the works; but, their commander being killed, they quitted the iſland. Great complaints were made by the Portugueze embaſſador at Paris, of this infraction of treaty (172). La Noue expreſsly ſays, that the piratical expeditions, undertaken by Frenchmen annually to the coaſt of Peru, did not drain the nation of a ſmaller number, than five hundred ſubjects a year (173).

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Enterprize of Montluc.

Piracies.

Fire-ſhips were well known, and frequently uſed, under Henry the Third. Frederic Jembelli, an engineer, whom the Spaniards had diſguſted, threw himſelf into Antwerp, when beſieged by the prince of Parma, in 1584; and gave ſignal proofs of his capacity, by ſending down the Schelde, ſeveral fire-ſhips of prodigious magnitude. They had nearly demoliſhed the bridge, or mole, conſtructed by that great commander, acroſs the river, and on which he repoſed all his hopes of ſucceſs. Jembelli is

Fire-ſhips.

Their invention.

(171) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 524.
(172) D'Aub. vol. i. p. 247 and 248. Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. 256—258.
(173) La Noue, p. 182.

regarded

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regarded as their inventor (174): it is, however, inconteſtable, that they were uſed by the Hugonots ſeveral years earlier, in 1577, at the ſiege of Brouage, in Poitou. Clermont d'Amboiſe, who commanded the fleet of Rochelle, ſent four fire-ſhips, to burn the royal ſquadron. De Thou very accurately deſcribes their nature and deſtination (175). We find no mention of them among the Engliſh, before the invaſion of the Spaniſh Armada in 1588, when they performed ſuch ſignal execution.

(174) Buſbeq. de Bong. p. 242. (175) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 518.

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CHAP. II.

State of commerce, and navigation.—Bankers.—Attempts at colonization.—Manufactures.—Sumptuary laws.—Agriculture.—Condition of the peasants.—Oppression of the inferior orders of society.—Population.—State of Paris.—The Louvre.—Public edifices.—Courts of law, and of criminal judicature.—Venality of offices.—Corruption of justice.—Confiscation.—Torture.—Punishments and executions.—Sale of honors and dignities.

CHAP. II.

State of the French commerce.

IT is, by no means, easy, from the most accurate and laborious comparison of the materials, left us by the contemporary authors, to form any clear or perfect idea of the precise state of the French commerce under the last princes of the race of Valois. The information on that point, is usually short, obscure, and unsatisfactory; while, on subjects of far inferior importance, they frequently embrace a vast detail. We may, however, safely assert, that the true principles of trade were, at that period, little understood, or studied, either by men of speculative research, or by statesmen or financiers. A very precarious protection was extended by the state, to the merchant adventurer: navigation was dangerous, not only from the want of charts, which might direct the mariner; but from the number of pirates, with which the Mediterranean and the other European seas were infested. Ships were, besides, liable to detention, and even to confiscation, either from the rapacious spirit of the government, or from the impolitic and pernicious regulations, adopted in various countries, with a view

Impediments to trade.

CHAP. II.

a view to draw unreasonable advantages from the affluence of foreign traders. Monopolies, or exclusive privileges, granted by the French kings, to favoured individuals, fettered, and oppressed the genius of commerce. Impolitic prohibitions, originating in narrow and contracted ideas of national benefit, prevented the exportation of many articles. Industry had not discovered and improved the numerous sources of internal riches. Naval enterprize, and discovery, rather than the spirit of trade, characterized the age. Gold was the object of general research, rather than the exchange of commodities, and the progressive acquisition of wealth. The example of Spain and Portugal, whose sovereigns had over-run and conquered the richest portions of the Old and New World with incredible rapidity; and whose subjects returned home with the spoils of India, of Africa, and of Peru; had contributed to awaken avidity, and to debauch the sober genius of laborious application. Men preferred distant and precarious expeditions, in quest of plunder, or in search of mines, to the beaten track of limited profit. The effect of so many causes, operating to one point, was sensibly felt: and may account for the slender and contracted portion of trade enjoyed by France, at this period of her history.

Objects of commercial research.

Objects of exportation.

The three great and principal articles of exportation appear to have been corn, wine, and salt, though it was frequently prohibited, under the severest penalties, to send any grain out of the kingdom (1). La Noue estimates the sum annually received for these three commodities, from foreign nations; to which he adds a fourth, "Pastel," or sweet-meats; at twelve millions of livres, or about half a million sterling (2).

(1) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 505. (2) La Noue, p. 356.

All

All the weſtern provinces, included between the Loire and the Garonne, but, particularly Poitou, were productive of corn, which the Spaniards and Portugueze gladly purchaſed, in exchange for the luxuries of the eaſtern and weſtern hemiſpheres. The port of Les Sables d'Olonne, ſituated in the little iſland of Olonne, on the coaſt of Poitou, was the uſual mart, to which the ſhips of thoſe nations reſorted, under Henry the Third. A fleet of twenty-five Portugueze veſſels, laden with corn, and ready to return home, was attacked and captured, in the harbour above-mentioned, contrary to the rights of nations, and on very inſufficient pretences, by a detachment of Hugonots, from Rochelle, in 1577, notwithſtanding the oppoſition of the prince of Condé. It was an act of lawleſs and unauthorized piracy, which ſtrongly proves the inſecure ſtate of property and commerce in that age, when the crown, ſcarcely able to defend itſelf, could afford little protection either to its own ſubjects, or to foreigners, who viſited the kingdom for the purpoſes of trade (3).

Wines.

Great quantities of corn were raiſed in ſome of the provinces near the Pyrenees, where the produce of eſtates was principally received in grain, and tranſported by the Garonne, to Bourdeaux (4). But, that city was more renowned for its wines, which, in the ſixteenth, as well as in the eighteenth century, were in the higheſt eſtimation, throughout Europe. It may be doubted, whether before 1589, any wines, the growth of Champagne or Burgundy, were exported by ſea, from France. We may form a very accurate judgment of the annual revenue which the crown derived from the commerce of the Garonne. It was eſtimated at more than a hundred thouſand crowns, in 1586, when Royan, a

(3) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 505—507.
(4) Comm. de Montluc, vol. iv. p. 165.

caſtle,

CHAP. II. caſtle, commanding the entrance of the river, was ſurprized by one of the adherents of the king of Navarre (5).

Salt. The Germans and Engliſh carried on a very conſiderable trade to Brouage, a town ſituate in the vicinity of Rochelle, and then poſſeſſing a commodious harbour. Salt was the principal, or only commodity, exported from thence; which was found in immenſe quantities, over the adjacent country. Theſe ſalt-pits and works produced a great revenue, from the foreign, as well as domeſtic conſumption (6). The Hugonots derived from them one of their beſt pecuniary reſources, as they were enabled to repay, in ſalt, the various articles of commerce or of defence, received from England (7). How vaſt the reſort of that nation was to Brouage, may be evinced by the circumſtance of Lanſac, who commanded the forces of Henry in 1577, when he made himſelf maſter of the place, having ſeized on near ſixty veſſels, belonging to the Engliſh, which were at anchor off the iſle of Ré. Elizabeth, juſtly irritated at ſuch an infraction of treaty between the two crowns, immediately cauſed an embargo to be laid on all the French ſhips in her ports; and it was not till after a negociation of ſome length, that matters were re-adjuſted (8).

Brouage.

Trade to the Levant. Scarcely any branches of manufacture were exported by the French, in the period of which we are treating; and vaſt ſums were annually ſent out of the kingdom, for the purchaſe of various articles of luxury. The Levant trade drained France of above ſixty thouſand pounds ſterling a-year; the Turks, in that age, as the Chineſe, in the preſent, accepting only ſpecie in return for the commodities which foreigners demanded (9). Spices, and many

(5) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 573. (6) Memoires de Caſt. p. 261.
(7) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 515.
(8) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 529. (9) Tavannes, p. 469.

other

other valuable productions of India, ſtill continued to be received by way of Alexandria, notwithſtanding the augmenting competition of the European nations who had diſcovered, or of thoſe who began to participate in the benefits of the paſſage round the Cape of Good Hope. The Ottoman miniſters appear even to have entertained the moſt enlarged conceptions of commerce, if we may judge of them from the propoſitions made by Amurath the Third, in 1582, to Francis, duke of Anjou, at that time ſovereign of the Low Countries. Embaſſadors were ſent by the ſultan, with offers to make Antwerp the ſole emporium for all the goods imported into Europe from Greece and the Turkiſh provinces in Aſia. They demanded permiſſion for eighteen merchants of their nation to reſide in the city of Antwerp, in order to conduct the ſales. It was projected to land the articles of merchandize at Marſeilles; to tranſport them acroſs Provence and Languedoc, to Bourdeaux; and to ſhip them from the river Garonne, to Flanders. We cannot ſufficiently admire a plan ſo extenſive in its principles and operations; and which, if it had been realized, might have produced a vaſt revolution in the commercial ſyſtem of Europe, before the lapſe of half a century. But, the anſwer returned to the propoſal, was inconcluſive; and the dominion of the duke of Anjou in the Netherlands was too ſhort, to permit of its being reſumed on either ſide (10).

CHAP. II.

Propoſal for making Antwerp the emporium of the Turkiſh trade.

The trade between France and the Baltic was very limited, if it can be properly ſaid to have had any exiſtence, before the reign of Charles the Ninth. The election of his brother, the duke of Anjou, to the Poliſh throne, in 1573, opened a proſpect of eſtabliſhing an advantageous traffic with Dantzic, which city conſtituted a part of the dependencies of

Trade to the Baltic.

(10) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 646.

Poland.

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Poland. A ſociety of merchants, to the number of near thirty, in the beginning of the year 1574, fitted out ſome ſhips from Dieppe, in hopes, by the favor and protection of the new prince, to acquire a ſhare of the Baltic commerce; but, Henry's precipitate flight from Cracow ſoon afterwards, probably withdrew the principal incitement to the enterprize (11). It may excite ſome degree of ſurprize, that, notwithſtanding the impediments oppoſed by nature to any connexion between France and Peru, from the length and dangers of a navigation round Cape Horn; and in defiance of the jealous precautions embraced by the court of Madrid, to exclude all European nations from any participation in the benefits ariſing from their poſſeſſions in South America; yet, that ſhips from France viſited thoſe diſtant countries. We find in 1576, that a captain Nivelle, an experienced officer of the marine, on his return from Peru, was driven to take refuge with his veſſel in the ports of England, by the violence of a ſtorm. He was immediately arreſted by order of Elizabeth; his ſhip detained; and he himſelf was in imminent hazard of being treated as a criminal of ſtate. It is not eaſy to account for this conduct in the Engliſh miniſters, unleſs it was done to conciliate the good will of Philip the Second. That Nivelle was no unauthorized adventurer, is evident, from the preſſing ſolicitations made in his behalf, by the king of France: but, whether the object of his voyage had been plunder, or commerce, it is not poſſible to aſcertain (12).

To Peru.

Between the French and Engliſh, there exiſted a very conſiderable mercantile intercourſe, under the two laſt kings of the family of Valois. It was, notwithſtanding, perpetually interrupted by diſputes,

Trade between England and France.

(11) Le Lab. ſur Gaſt. vol. iii. p. 390.
(12) Ibid. p. 497 and 498.

ſeizures,

seizures, confiscations, and acts of violence, on the part of each crown, or nation Elizabeth, whatever pretensions of amity she might affect, carried on a gainful traffic, by means of her subjects, with the Hugonots; and that able princess, conscious of the embarrassments with which the French monarchs were necessitated to struggle, observed scarcely any measures, in her treatment of the individuals, who entered her ports. It is easy to see, that the English were commonly the aggressors, though they always demanded, and usually obtained satisfaction. The depression under which France laboured from 1560, to a period considerably later than the death of Henry the Third, has contributed to augment the lustre of Elizabeth's reign. She may be said, on many occasions, to have almost dictated to the kings of France, in matters of policy, as well as of commerce (13). Numberless proofs of this fact are to be found in the contemporary writers.

Bankers.

The principal bankers who were established in Paris before 1589, seem, as in London, at that time, to have been Italians, or Lombards. Very arbitrary and severe inquiries into their pecuniary transactions and remittances, were made by government, at pleasure. Seizures of money, upon vague, or insufficient pretences, often followed. Bankers were prohibited from having in their possession, any gold or silver coin, except of France, or Spain, on pain of confiscation (14). We may form some estimate of the state of commercial intercourse between Paris and London, in December, 1573, by the circumstance of there not being a single banker in the former city, who had a correspondent in England. Charles the Ninth expressly asserts this

Intercourse between London and Paris.

(13) Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 316; vol. ii. p. 316; vol. iii. p. 431 and 432, p. 515, and p. 535.

(14) Busbeq. letter 8th.

extraordinary

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extraordinary, and curious fact, in a letter to his embaſſador at the court of Elizabeth, of that date. He adds, that there was no banker in Paris, who could furniſh letters of exchange on London, for ſo large a ſum as fifty thouſand crowns; and he refers it to his miniſter to diſcover a mode of making the remittance (15). Yet, a few months later, in June 1574, Chiverny, the agent of Henry the Third, and who was afterwards chancellor of France, ſays, that he contrived, as ſoon as Charles the Ninth was dead, in the uncertainty of the rout which his maſter might take on his return from Poland, to tranſmit "letters of bank" to Augſburg, to Vienna, and to Venice. Twenty-five thouſand crowns were contained in each of the three remittances. It diſplays the ſuperior degree of facility in mercantile tranſactions with Germany, and the regular communication ſubſiſting between Paris and that country (16).

Remittances.

When Henry the Third borrowed a hundred thouſand crowns of Ferdinand the Firſt, great duke of Tuſcany, in 1589, a part of the ſum was ſent in ſpecie, acroſs the Apennines and the Alps, from Florence to Augſburg, on the backs of mules. Ferdinand did not embrace this mode of remittance, from any difficulty of procuring letters of exchange; but, with an intention of keeping the affair concealed. Such was the publicity of bankers accounts, that, if conveyed through their medium, it muſt have become univerſally known throughout Tuſcany (17).

Mode of remitting money.

Colonies.

While Spain and Portugal, fortified by the Papal grant, quietly divided between them the vaſt regions of Aſia and America, France remained deſtitute of

(15) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 366—369.
(16) Chiverny, vol. i. p. 52.
(17) De Thou, vol. x. p. 630.

any

any colonies, or eſtabliſhments, beyond the Cape of Good Hope, or the Atlantic. Francis the Firſt was not inſenſible to ſo ſevere an excluſion. "I wiſh," ſaid he, "to ſee the article in Adam's will, by "which the kings of Spain and Portugal are autho- "rized, in virtue of his bequeſt, to divide the New "World, without allotting me any ſhare (18)." The baron de Levi having diſcovered Canada in 1518, Francis ſent out Cartier, an able navigator of St. Malo, to aſcertain the nature and productions of that inhoſpitable country. He arrived there in 1534, and returned to France with the expected information; but, no attempt ſeems to have been then made to plant, ſubject, or colonize Canada (19). Under Henry the Second, in 1556, Villegagnon, a French gentleman, knight of Malta, having obtained the approbation of Coligni, admiral of France, to carry out a number of adventurers to Brazil, landed there, and conſtructed a fort. A reinforcement was ſent him in the following year, principally compoſed of Calviniſts, from Geneva. Many women embarked among them; and preparations were made for eſtabliſhing a powerful colony. But, theſe proſpects ſoon ceaſed: diſſenſions, ariſing from religious cauſes, produced the moſt deſtructive conſequences; and the Portugueze, joined with the natives, having attacked Villegagnon, he was reduced to the neceſſity of leaving his artillery, embarking his followers, and returning to Europe (20).

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Attempts at coloniza- tion, under Henry the Second.

Not diſcouraged by preceding misfortunes, Coligni, whoſe vaſt and expanded mind was continually directed towards objects of national advantage; ſent out, in 1562, Ribaud, in order to form an eſtabliſh-

Efforts of Coligni, to form colonies.

(18) Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 635.
(19) Ibid. vol. i. p. 635 and 636.
(20) Hiſt. Univ. D'Aub. vol. i. p. 41 and 42.

ment

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ment in Florida. He was unſucceſsful: nevertheleſs, in 1564, Lodoniere, a ſecond adventurer, effected the object of the expedition, built a fortreſs, and entered into connexions of friendſhip and commerce with the Indians. Ribaud returning with ſeven ſhips in the following year, the two chiefs prepared to puſh their conqueſts, when a ſuperior ſquadron of Spaniſh veſſels appeared. Hoſtilities enſued, which were unfavorable to the French; and Ribaud, with five hundred of his followers, having, on the ſolemn aſſurances of ſafety, conſented to a parley with the enemy, they were indiſcriminately maſſacred, and their bodies reduced to aſhes. Lodoniere eſcaped on board the veſſels, and landed ſafely in France (21). Hiſtory has ſcarcely ever commemorated a more complete, or extraordinary revenge, than was taken for this atrocious breach of faith. A Frenchman, named des Gourgues, deſcended of a reſpectable family at Bourdeaux, and who had been a galley ſlave, chained to the oar by the Spaniards, from which ſtate of ſervitude he was redeemed, undertook to vindicate the wounded honor of his country, and to retaliate the cruelty of the Spaniards. Enraged at the relation of the events which had taken place in Florida, he ſold his property, in order to fit out three veſſels; the largeſt of which did not exceed two hundred and fifty tons, and the ſmalleſt was only fifty. About three hundred perſons, of all deſcriptions, allured by hopes of gain or plunder, accompanied him on the expedition. Arriving on the coaſt of Florida, he took the forts by ſtorm, which the Spaniſh commander, Melandez, had occupied; and after reproaching him with his perfidy and barbarity, he cauſed the whole garriſon, amounting to near four hundred and ſixty men, to be either hanged, or put to death.

Maſſacre of the French adventurers.

Retaliation on the Spaniards.

(21) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 248 and 249.

Melandez

Melandez had affixed labels to the dead bodies of Ribaud and the French, whom he maſſacred; ſignifying, that "they were ſo treated, not as French, "but as Lutherans." In imitation of this inſult, des Gourgues attached a ſimilar inſcription to the ſlaughtered Spaniards, declaring, that "they were "not put to death as ſubjects of Philip the Second, "but, as perfidious miſcreants." Having put all the artillery taken from the forts, on board his ſhips, he re-embarked, and landed at Rochelle in June, 1568, after a paſſage of only ſeventeen days. But, inſtead of receiving any marks of approbation from Charles the Ninth on his arrival at court, he had occaſion to employ the interceſſion of his friends, to prevent his being capitally puniſhed. The admiration, expreſſed by his countrymen, and by foreign nations, at ſo ſignal an act of vengeance, was his only reward (22). It ſtrongly depictures the ſpirit of the age, in which the genius of chivalry was not yet extinct; and it ſtill more forcibly demonſtrates the abject ſituation to which France was reduced, after the death of Henry the Second, when Spain remained for near forty years, the moſt formidable power in Europe. From 1568, to the acceſſion of Henry the Fourth, no further attempt ſeems to have been made, to form colonies, or eſtabliſhments, beyond the Atlantic: a circumſtance which cannot excite ſurprize, if we reflect on the calamitous condition of the kingdom between thoſe two periods.

CHAP. II.

Behaviour of the French court.

If, from the conſideration of commerce, we turn our attention to manufactures, we ſhall find that they were neither numerous, nor advanced to a ſtate of any perfection, under Henry the Third. Articles of elegance and luxury were imported from foreign nations; and even ſuch as were of general conſumption, had not attained beyond their infancy.

Manufactures.

(22) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 354—356.

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A fabrick of silk had been introduced under Francis the First; but, it met with many impediments, from the climate, from the ignorance of the artists, and above all, from the troubles of France. It was reserved for a happier and more tranquil reign, to awaken, and direct the industry of the French in this branch of art. Leather and parchment were prepared with considerable dexterity, at Troyes in Champagne; which was likewise renowned for the goodness of its dyes, in which occupation the inhabitants were principally employed (23). A manufacture of white paper was established at Brignolles, in Provence, about the beginning of Henry the Second's reign, and it was not the only one of the kind in the kingdom (24). The French in the sixteenth century, as in the present, appear to have discovered little ingenuity, or talents, for working in steel and iron. Fire-arms were far better fabricated in Lombardy. It was from Milan, that all the best arquebusses, corslets, helmets, and musquets, were procured. The science of gilding and inlaying armor was, likewise, practised with superior skill, beyond the Alps. Gaspard, an artist of Milan, was the favorite workman, who supplied Paris with every kind of arms, under Charles the Ninth, and his successor. Negroti, a Milaneze merchant, resided for the purpose, in that capital; where he acquired a fortune of above twenty-five thousand crowns, by the business, in the course of fifteen or sixteen years (25). We may judge how high a price was paid for armor in general, by the expence of a common morion, or head-piece gilt, and fabricated at Milan. It cost in Paris, seven crowns: but, encouragement having been held out to workmen in that branch, the secret of gilding was discovered

Fire-arms.

Milan supplied France with that article.

(23) De Thou, vol. x. p. 314. (24) Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 13.
(25) Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 294.

and

and ſucceſsfully executed in France. Even then, the morions were purchaſed in Italy, and finiſhed in Paris. Their price was, however, reduced to about four, to five crowns (26).

Muſquets.

Charles the Ninth, in 1560, endeavoured to introduce among his ſoldiers, muſquets, fabricated at Mentz, and Abbeville, where manufactures of arms were eſtabliſhed; but, it was found impoſſible to accuſtom the troops to handle and carry them, on account of their enormous and oppreſſive weight (27). The fineſt muſquets long continued to be brought from Milan. Gunpowder was made in France, under Henry the Third; but, not in ſufficient quantity to diſpenſe with the neceſſity of importing that article, as well as ſaltpetre, from foreign ſtates. Genoa, in particular, ſupplied the French with gunpowder, on emergencies (28).

Sumptuary laws.

Sumptuary laws were enacted by the vigilance of the celebrated chancellor l'Hopital, under Charles the Ninth, with an eſpecial view to diſcriminate the different orders of the people. Induſtry ſuffered little by the prohibition of articles of luxury, chiefly derived from foreign countries; and morals were benefited by the regulation. Princes, dukes, and their wives, were alone permitted the uſe of gold and ſilver ſtuffs. Silk, diamonds, and pearls, were interdicted to all except gentlewomen (29). In the beginning of 1581, theſe laws were renewed, and pecuniary penalties affixed to the breach of their obſervance (30). Henry the Third, while ſunk in luxury himſelf, and indulging his minions in every refinement of an effeminate taſte, affected to deprive the other ſex of their natural ornaments, and to

(26) Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 298 and 299.
(27) Ibid. p 302—304.
(28) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 212, and p. 278.
(29) Traduction de l'Hop. vol. ii. p. 118. (30) L'Etoile, p. 72.

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execute the new edict reſpecting dreſs, with the utmoſt ſeverity. By an impolitic exerciſe of his power, he commanded the provoſt of the palace, an officer, whoſe juriſdiction extended indefinitely over the metropolis; to arreſt, and to convey to priſon, all ſuch females as he ſhould find, violating the ſumptuary regulations. In obedience to the king's orders, he ſeized, and dragged into confinement, not leſs than fifty or ſixty women, among whom were ſeveral of condition. They were even forcibly detained in the priſon of the Fort l'Eveque, near Paris, till the next day, though offers were made to pay the penalty incurred, and to give ſecurity for their future compliance with the edict. But, Henry was not far from repenting of his indiſcreet interference with the police of the capital. A ſedition had almoſt taken place: the provoſt narrowly eſcaped the effects of the popular indignation; and the king condeſcended to repair in perſon to the priſon, to releaſe the captives, and even to pay the fees incurred for their confinement. This curious fact happened in November, 1583 (31).

Regulations reſpecting dreſs.

Agriculture could not poſſibly have attained beyond its rudeſt ſtate, in a country where the harveſt was rarely reaped by the ſame hands which had ſowed the grain; where the huſbandman was at the mercy of the ſoldier; and where impolitic trade laws withdrew the neceſſary encouragement from the cultivator of the ſoil. The ravages of famine were frequently experienced in their utmoſt ſeverity. At Paris, in May, 1586, ſuch was the dearth of corn, that a peck of wheat ſold from three to four crowns (32). It was even higher in the month of June, of the ſucceeding year, when the ſame meaſure of corn roſe to five crowns, or thirty livres, in the

Agriculture.

Famine. Its ſeverity.

(31) Buſbeq. letter 29. L'Etoile, p. 72 and 73.
(32) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de France, p. 207.

metropolis;

metropolis; and to ſeven, or eight crowns, in the ſurrounding cities (33). We may judge of the miſeries which muſt have been experienced by the poor, at a time when, it would ſeem, no proviſion was made by the laws, for their maintenance. Contributions for the ſupport of the poor, were altogether voluntary, before the year 1587. During the famine of 1568, ſuch was the prodigious concourſe of beggars in the ſtreets of Paris, that it became indiſpenſable to adopt ſome meaſures for their ſubſiſtence. Two deputies from each pariſh, went from houſe to houſe, collecting charitable donations (34). This remedy being only temporary, and inadequate to the cure of the evil, it was enacted in an aſſembly held in Paris, on the 8th January, 1587, that the citizens ſhould raiſe at once, the aggregate ſum for three years, taken at the eſtimate of that which was weekly raiſed and appropriated to the relief of the poor. With ſo conſiderable a fund, which was actually collected, it was propoſed to clear the ſtreets of the numerous beggars; to compel thoſe who were able to work, and to feed the infirm (35). Notwithſtanding theſe beneficent and judicious meaſures, it was found neceſſary, only five months afterwards, during the ſcarcity of corn, to ſend two thouſand poor, to the hoſpital of Grenelle, without the city; where an allowance of five ſous, or twopence halfpenny, was made daily to each, by the king. Although ſuch a diſtribution muſt have been, if we conſider the relative value of money, extremely ample; yet, it became requiſite to withdraw it, and to place the poor in their former ſituation, becauſe, unreſtrained by the proviſion allotted for their maintenance, they could not be kept from returning to the capital, and reſuming their original profeſſion (36).

Police, Beggars.

Poor laws.

(33) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt de France, p. 222.
(34) Ibid. p. 207. (35) Ibid. p. 217. (36) Ibid. p. 222.

of

CHAP. II.

State of the peasants.

During the thirty years which elapsed between the death of Henry the Second, and the extinction of his posterity in the person of Henry the Third, the condition of the French peasants may, perhaps, be justly said to have been more deplorable than that of any other class of men, in Europe. The greater part of the period was passed in civil war; and the few intervals of nominal peace, were short, precarious, sanguinary, and cruel. The "ipsa etiam pace "sævum" of the Roman historian, might be applied with equal truth, to the French under the three last kings of Valois, as to the countrymen of Tacitus, during the dissensions and calamities which followed the accession of Galba. Neither the royal army, nor the forces of the Protestants being regularly paid, it became impossible for them to subsist, except by plunder; nor was any lenity shewn to friends and adherents, by a famished soldiery, undisciplined, fierce, and rendered obdurate by habits of violence. Even the cessation of actual hostilities, in consequence of the treaties which were repeatedly made between the two parties, was productive of little redress. We may be satisfied of this fact, by perusing the description given to Charles the Ninth, in one of the short truces, rather than times of peace, which took place under his reign, at the close of 1573. It was drawn by a nobleman of the first rank, the count de Tavannes; and he speaks only of the Burgundian peasants, who had suffered far less by the preceding disasters, than the inhabitants of almost all the other provinces. "They com- "plain," says he, "to your majesty, that the gen- "darmerie not being paid, pillage, ransom, and "treat as enemies, the people in all the villages; "nor do they dare even to utter a complaint, lest "the soldier, irritated, should complete the desola- "tion of their families and properties, by instantly "reducing

Oppression of them.

Condition of the Burgundian peasantry.

" reducing their cottages to aſhes (37)." If ſuch was the treatment of the Catholic peaſants, by men of their own perſuaſion, in a moment of peace; what muſt have been the enormities acted, when civil and religious enmity extinguiſhed every emotion of humanity? Marſhal Montluc did not bluſh to be called the " Bourreau Royal (38);" and his Memoires, in almoſt every page, bear bloody teſtimony to the juſtice of the appellation (39). We are ſtruck with horror, on peruſing in La Noue, and d'Aubigné, the incredible and wanton acts of flagitious cruelty, exerciſed upon the inferior claſſes of ſociety, who were incapable of reſiſtance, and whoſe ſufferings do not excite more pity, than they awaken indignation (40). The " Gautiers," who were put to the ſword in 1589, by Montpenſier, were wretched Norman peaſants, driven to deſpair by oppreſſion, and rendered ſavage from the cruelty of the nobles and ſoldiery (41). Religion had no concern in their inſurrection, which reſulted from civil and political cauſes.

CHAP. II.

Cruelties exerciſed towards the Hugonots.

The Gautiers.

Nor was it only on the huſbandman or cottager, that military ferocity exhauſted its rage. All the lower orders, deſtitute of any efficacious protection, were alike victims to the deſpotiſm of their ſuperiors. Strozzi, though, in many reſpects, an officer of high merit, and no way diſtinguiſhed by a natural barbarity of diſpoſition, yet, committed an act, to parallel which, we muſt have recourſe to the annals of Domitian, or Caracalla, in antiquity. Unhappily, the preſent ſavage and infatuated race of republicans, if that epithet can juſtly belong to frantic and furious banditti, have outdone the moſt ex-

Barbarity of Strozzi.

(37) Tavannes, p. 34. (38) Montluc, vol. iv. p. 121.
(39) Ibid. p. 112, p. 313, p. 221 and 222, and p. 92 and 93.
(40) La Noue, p. 346. D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. paſſim. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 9.
(41) De Thou, vol. x. p. 600.

travagant

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travagant crimes of the Roman Cæsars; and have rendered credible the fabulous, or exaggerated enormities of the greatest tyrants who have desolated the earth. In 1570, after the conclusion of the peace between Carles the Ninth and Coligni, the army was, from its undisciplined state, accompanied by a vast number of prostitutes, and common women. Strozzi, who had made many ineffectual attempts to purge the camp of them, caused above eight hundred of these unfortunate creatures, at a signal given, to be precipitated from the Pont de Cé, near Angers, into the river Loire, where they all perished. The story is so extraordinary, that it would be incredible, if it was not related by Brantome, an eye-witness, Strozzi's intimate friend and panegyrist (42). He, however, condemns it as a detestable act, and attributes it to the counsels of others. It appears incontestably, that no sort of punishment was inflicted on the perpetrator of so abominable a deed, except the frowns and averted looks of the ladies of the court, incensed at the cruelty shewn to persons of their own sex. But, a mutiny had nearly taken place among the troops themselves, who beheld the objects of their affection swallowed up in the waves, and crying piteously for succour. If any thing can augment the enormity of the fact, it is the consideration, that it was a cool, and deliberate proceeding, done by the colonel-general of the French infantry, and perpetrated almost in the presence of his sovereign, who was at Angers when it was committed. The crimes of the duke of Alva, Strozzi's contemporary, were not reflective murders, wantonly acted; but sanguinary executions, enjoined by Philip the Second, performed with solemnity, and in some measure palliated, or justified by the revolt of the Flemings.

Reflexions on that event.

Opposite conduct of the duke of Alva.

(42) Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 416—418.

Flemings. Far from eſteeming it neceſſary, in order to reſtore diſcipline among the Spaniſh bands, to cauſe the women who miniſtered to their pleaſures to be murdered, the general of Philip permitted them in an ample degree. When he marched from Milan into Flanders, in the year 1567, during which march the ſevereſt obedience was enforced with rigor, and not a peaſant was deſpoiled of his property in the ſlighteſt inſtance; twelve hundred courtezans accompanied the camp. Four hundred were of a ſuperior deſcription, and rode on horſeback: the remaining eight hundred followed on foot (43). CHAP. II.

Calculations of the population of extenſive countries, are, in general, made upon very problematical principles, and are ſubject to great uncertainty. National vanity leads ſo obviouſly to exaggerate, that we muſt lend an academic faith to all aſſertions, unleſs ſupported by incontrovertible facts. It is difficult to form any decided opinion upon the number of people which France contained, at the period of which we are treating; and no contemporary writer has ventured to name their aggregate amount: but, we are juſtified in ſuppoſing, that, in an age when civil war had made ſuch deep ravages, the kingdom could not, in proportion to its magnitude, have contained as many inhabitants, as it did before the late revolution in 1789. Yet, La Noue ſpeaks of the multitudes who ſwarmed in every province; and compares the population in France to that of the county of Flanders, before the inſurrections, produced by the tyranny of Philip the Second, had diminiſhed the number of the Flemings (44). His teſtimony is reſpectable, not only Population of France.

(43) Strada de Bell. Belg. vol. ii. p. 90. Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 81.

(44) La Noue, p. 356.

from

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from the known integrity of the author; but, from its being written under the reign of Henry the Third, in a period of the greateſt national depreſſion. We are aſſured, that in 1581, the whole kingdom contained ninety-ſix biſhopricks, and one hundred and thirty-two thouſand pariſhes and hamlets (45). Four years earlier, in 1577, the duke of Nevers calculated, that in the dominions of France, there were three millions of hearths. If we eſtimate each of them at ſix perſons to a family, it will give a population of only eighteen millions. But, it muſt be remembered, that neither French Flanders, Artois, Alſace, Lorrain, the county of Burgundy, Rouſillon, Cerdagne, nor Bearn, were then included in the monarchy. It was ſuppoſed that by a poll-tax, levied equally on all the inhabitants, a ſum of twenty millions of livres might be raiſed annually (46), or about eight hundred and fifty thouſand pounds ſterling. On the number of inhabitants at Paris, we may form a more accurate judgment. It was found, that in 1588, there were in the capital, at leaſt twenty thouſand men in the ſervice of the League, capable of bearing arms; many ſtrangers having been recently introduced into the city, by the adherents of the houſe of Guiſe, in order to augment their ſtrength. The whole population exceeded two hundred thouſand (47).

Population of Paris.

Paris. Its ſtate.

The French metropolis, at the cloſe of Henry the Third's reign, was divided into ſixteen wards, or quarters, and was principally built on the northern bank of the Seine, and in the iſland of "Notre Dame." It had not as yet made any conſiderable progreſs to the ſouth of the river, where the "Faux-

(45) Cabinet des trois Perles, p. 5, cited in the Satyre Menippée, vol. ii. p. 70.

(46) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 197.

(47) Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 6. Mem. de Chiverny, vol. i. p. 163.

bourg

bourg St. Germain" is now ſituated. Strong walls, flanked with large towers, ſurrounded the city; and the keys of the gates were depoſited in the hands of the municipal magiſtrates, who took eſpecial care that they ſhould be carefully ſhut every evening. The citizens were regularly enrolled, diſciplined, and accuſtomed to the uſe and exerciſe of arms: they elected their own military officers; had their places of aſſembling, their banners, and their watch-words. If not formidable from their ſkill, they were ſtill reſpectable from their numbers (48). In general, the ſtreets were ſo narrow, that it was eaſy to leap from the tops of the houſes on one ſide, to thoſe on the other; and it was a common paſtime, during the carnival, for the young nobility to divert themſelves by this hazardous amuſement (49). That the principal ſtreets were paved, is undoubted; ſince we find that, at the preparations made for celebrating the unfortunate tournament in which Henry the Second was killed by Montgomery, in June, 1559, the ſtreet "Saint Antoine" was unpaved, converted into liſts, and adorned with theatres and triumphal arches (50). Other proofs of this fact might be adduced: but, the dirt and filth were notwithſtanding ſuch, as to render all paſſage exceedingly difficult, and to contribute, in an eminent degree, to the peſtilential and malignant diſtempers, by which the capital was frequently deſolated. In 1583, Montjoſieu, a man of talents, and peculiarly ſkilled in mechanics, undertook the execution of a plan which he had formed, for cleanſing the ſtreets; but, the expence ſo much exceeded the eſtimate made by him, that in endeavouring to accompliſh it, he conſiderably impaired his own private for-

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Municipal government.

Mode of building.

Regulations of police.

(48) Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 3.
(49) Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 326.
(50) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 84 and 85.

tune.

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tune (51). At all the corners, were fixed heavy chains, commonly faſtened and ſealed; but, which could be, at the ſhorteſt warning, ſtretched acroſs; and by the additions of barrels filled with earth, they formed a barricado, inſurmountable to infantry, or cavalry. Henry the Third experienced the formidable nature of theſe barriers, at the inſurrection of the Pariſians, in May, 1588 (52). The private houſes were conſtructed with ſalley ports, which rendered them more tenable and defenſible againſt an armed force (53). On the other hand, the Baſtile might be regarded at once, as the citadel of Paris, and as a priſon of ſtate. It was ſtrong; and the treachery alone of Tetu, who commanded in it, produced its ſurrender to the duke of Guiſe, immediately after the king's flight from the metropolis (54). Ornano had offered to maintain it, againſt all the forces of the League.

The Baſtile.

The Louvre.

The Louvre itſelf was rather a fortreſs, than a palace; and did not become the ordinary reſidence of the French monarchs, before the reign of Charles the Ninth. Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second, occaſionally inhabited it; and the latter of thoſe princes made conſiderable embelliſhments, or augmentations; during which time he inhabited the Hotel de Maigrez, a houſe confiſcated to the crown, and preſented by him afterwards to the conſtable, Montmorenci (55). The palace of the "Tournelles," ſituated not far from the Baſtile, was the reſidence of Henry the Second, at the time of his unfortunate and premature death: but, Catherine of Medicis, ſtruck with horror at the recollection and

The Tournelles.

(51) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 78.
(52) Ibid. vol. x. p. 258. Davila, p. 690 and 691. Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 3.
(53) Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 3.
(54) De Thou, vol. x. p. 269.
(55) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 510.

fight

ſight of a place, which had been the ſcene of ſo tragical an accident, demoliſhed it to the foundations, and even cauſed the gardens contiguous, to be deſtroyed. We cannot wonder at her averſion to a palace, in the great hall of which, decorated at that time for balls and feſtivals, the dead body of her huſband lay in ſtate within a few days afterwards, ſurrounded with torches, altars, black cloth, and all the apparatus of funeral pomp (56). The aſpect of the Louvre, like that of almoſt all the palaces of kings throughout Europe, till the end of the ſixteenth century, inſpired terror, and partook more of the nature of a priſon, than of a royal reſidence, in many reſpects. It was compoſed of towers, conſtructed in a Gothic taſte, ſurrounded with a wide and deep ditch, acroſs which the entrance lay through vaſt gates, conſtantly guarded by archers. In 1574, Catherine of Medecis, as ſoon as Charles the Ninth had expired, cauſed all the doors and entrances to the Louvre, except one, to be cloſed up; and even of the remaining entrance, the gate was ſhut, and only the wicket left open, on each ſide of which were ſtationed the Switzers, who never quitted it by day or night (57). Theſe precautions were taken by the queen-mother, in order to prevent the eſcape of her ſon, the duke of Alençon, and of the king of Navarre, who remained, a long time, captives in the palace. Margaret, of Valois, in the year 1578, by an effort of courage and fidelity above her ſex, contrived to let down her brother, the duke of Alençon, by means of a rope, into the moat of the Louvre, whence he reached the abbey of St. Genevieve: but, ſhe deſcribes the attempt as of the moſt perilous nature (58).

Aſpect of the Louvre.

(56) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 85.
(57) L'Etoile, p. 4.
(58) Mem. de Marguérite de Valois, p. 164, 165.

There

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There were few monuments of architecture in Paris, at the deceaſe of Henry the Third. Catherine of Medicis, who, with the vices of the family from which ſhe ſprung, inherited, likewiſe, their taſte for the arts, began to conſtruct the palace of the Tuilleries, in 1564, and ſhe completed it before her death, in 1589. It was a magnificent edifice, raiſed on the models of antient Greece, purified from the barbarity of the middle ages. Europe had hitherto ſeen no building, which could be placed in competition with it, beyond the Alps (59). Not content with ſo ſplendid a proof of her paſſion for the elegant arts, ſhe erected another palace in the pariſh of St. Euſtace, on which ſhe expended immenſe ſums, and at which ſhe uſually reſided (60). The ſecond hotel in point of magnificence, in 1587, was that of the duke of Epernon, eſtimated at only five thouſand crowns leſs value than the former (61). We may form an idea of the price given for houſes of the higheſt deſcription, in 1575, by the ſum which Henry the Third paid for the one preſented by him to Chiverny, and in which he reſided when chancellor of France. It coſt twenty-ſix thouſand livres, or about eleven hundred pounds ſterling (62).

The Tuilleries.

Palaces.

Before the death of Charles the Ninth, there was not any bridge which croſſed the river Seine in its whole extent: thoſe previouſly exiſting, only conducted from the northern bank, into the iſland of "Notre Dame." In the month of May, 1578, the foundations of the "Pont neuf" were laid by the king in perſon. It was compoſed of hewn ſtone; du Cerceau being the architect; and a tax

Bridges.

Pont neuf.

(59) L'Art de Verif, vol. i. p. 648.
(60) De Thou, vol. x. p. 502.
(61) Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 167.
(62) Memoires de Chiverny, vol. i. p. 62.

was

was impoſed on the people expreſsly for its conſtruction (63). The troubles which ſoon aroſe in the kingdom, interrupted its continuance; and it was not completed till their termination, under the ſucceeding reign. Quelus, the celebrated minion of Henry the Third, killed in a duel with Entragues, was interred with a pomp little ſhort of royal, on the ſame day when the "Pont neuf" was begun; and the king, who was inconſolable for his loſs, wiſhed to have immortalized the memory of his favorite, by calling it the "Pont aux Pleurs (64)."

Paris began to be regarded as the royal reſidence.

Although Paris had, for ages, been regarded as the capital of the kingdom, it was not till after the year 1577, that it began to be the ordinary and general reſidence of the ſovereign. Louis the Eleventh, and his two immediate ſucceſſors, held their court more frequently on the Loire, at Tours, Amboiſe, or Blois. Chambord, under Francis the Firſt, as well as Fontainbleau; the former of which he built, and the latter he re-conſtructed; were the favorite places of his abode (65). Henry the Second betrayed the ſame preference; and Charles the Ninth commonly divided his time between Monceaux, St. Germain, and Vincennes. At the laſt-mentioned caſtle, only about two leagues from the metropolis, he expired. But, Henry the Third, though he twice convoked the aſſembly of the States General at Blois; yet, from preference, reſided during the greater part of his reign, at Paris. The city derived no ſmall acceſſion of opulence and ſplendor from the circumſtance; and the king ſeverely reproached the inhabitants for their ingratitude and revolt, after the numerous marks of predilection, which he had uni-

(63) L'Etoile, p. 29 and 30. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 727. Chron. Septennaire, p. 447.

(64) Vie de Mar. de Val. p. 258.

(65) Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. ii. p. 10—13.

formly

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formly exhibited towards them (66). If it were permitted to the hiſtorian to indulge in ſpeculation, it might be curious to reflect on the deſtiny which awaited Paris, if Henry had not periſhed by the knife of Clement; and to conjecture what changes might have taken place in the metropolis of the French monarchy. Davila expreſsly ſays, that on the evening preceding his aſſaſſination, the king publickly declared, "within a few days, neither "houſes nor walls ſhould exiſt, and that only "the veſtiges of Paris ſhould be diſcernible." It is highly probable, that the threat would have been executed in its utmoſt rigor, and that the victorious troops, compoſed of different nations, would have vied with each other, in accompliſhing the vengeance of their maſter. The age was prone to acts of blood; and it muſt be admitted, that no ſovereign ever received from rebellious ſubjects, greater cauſe for indignation. Henry's death extricated the Pariſians from the awful, and imminent deſtruction (67). So perfectly was the king's determination of transferring his future court and reſidence to ſome other place, known throughout France; that in 1588, after Henry's flight to Chartres, the inhabitants of Tours and Lyons ſent deputations, to beſeech of him, to give the preference to their reſpective cities (68). It may be conjectured, that he would have fixed his abode, as well as transferred the courts of law, and other appendages of the metropolis, to the banks of the Loire. Philip the Second had given him a recent example of the kind, by quitting Toledo, the antient capital of Caſtile, and chuſing Madrid for the new ſeat of the Spaniſh monarchs.

Rigorous intentions of Henry the Third, towards Paris.

Reflexions on it.

(66) Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 66.
(67) Davila, p. 815. Memoirs pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 284.
(68) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 65.

There

There is no circumſtance which more ſtrongly characterizes the period before us, than the univerſal corruption of juſtice. Francis the Firſt had introduced the purchaſe and ſale of employments among the members of the various parliaments of France, who inſtituted the ſupreme tribunals of civil and criminal judicature. His ſucceſſors, peculiarly, Henry the Third, had augmented, in a vaſt proportion, the number of magiſtrates in every court; and as all the charges were venal, the perſons who bought, had no other object in view, than to reimburſe themſelves for the expence incurred, by the moſt iniquitous perverſions of equity. The ſovereign himſelf, unreſtrained either by the majeſty and ſanctity of the throne, or by a regard to the felicity of his people, did not bluſh to interfere in deciſions of law, ſometimes by ſolicitation, and, not unfrequently, by open violence. Examples of both continually occur. In 1578, at the entreaty of his minions, Henry condeſcended to proſecute, by perſonal importunity, the ſuit of Madame de Senneterre, a lady of the court, againſt La Chatre, a gentleman attached to his brother, the duke of Anjou; and of conſequence, obnoxious to the king's favorites. So powerful a ſuitor did not exert his intereſt in vain; and La Chatre loſt his cauſe (69). The royal guards, in May, 1582, broke open a priſon, by the king's order, and reſcued a follower of La Valette, detained for a capital crime (70). Some years afterwards, de Ruſmenil, a gentleman of Picardy, accuſed of murder, having been conducted priſoner to the "Conciergerie," was taken from thence by force, at Henry's command, who was induced to commit the act, by the importunate requeſt of the duke of Joyeuſe (71). During the

Corruption, and venality of juſtice.

Interference of the crown in deciſions of law, and juſtice.

Creation of offices.

(69) Vie de Marg. de Val. p. 260.
(70) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 140.
(71) Ibid. p. 202.

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courſe of his whole reign, he ſeems only to have conſidered the creation of legal employments, as a mode of impoſing taxes. The multiplication of them exceeded belief, and produced the moſt deplorable conſequences. Even the higheſt dignities of the law became venal. In 1580, for the firſt time, Bellievre, on the reſignation of his office of Preſident of the great chamber of the parliament of Paris, received from his ſucceſſor, the attorney-general, the ſum of ſixty thouſand livres, or about two thouſand five hundred pounds, as the price of the vacant poſt of attorney-general, by Faye, a maſter of requeſts; who ſold his own to a third perſon, for near eleven hundred (72). The people became the victims of theſe iniquitous proceedings. So avowed was the traffic of charges to the courts of judicature, that the prices were public and notorious: they appear to have riſen in value; no doubt, from the encreaſing profits annexed to their exerciſe. In Auguſt, 1584, the place of counſellor in the parliament of Paris ſold for three thouſand five hundred crowns: thoſe of the criminal court of juſtice, called the "Chatelet," for two thouſand; and the maſterſhips of requeſts and accounts, from four to five thouſand crowns (73).

Sale of employments.

Ineffectual efforts of l'Hopital, to reform theſe abuſes.

It was in vain, that the celebrated chancellor, l'Hopital, under Charles the Ninth, one of the greateſt and moſt virtuous ſtateſmen whom France ever produced; endeavoured, by his exhortations and perſonal example, to check the torrent of venality. In an age and a court ſo corrupt, his reſiſtance could not effect a change in the national manners. All his writings prove the regret, as well as the indignation, which he felt, at the depravity of his countrymen. Placed on the higheſt eminence

(72) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 129.
(73) Ibid. p. 181.

of

of the law, and holding in his hand the great ſeal; neither the dignity of his office, nor the incorruptibility which was demanded from it, could protect the ſanctuary of juſtice from invaſion and pollution. "I am torn," ſays he, in one of his epiſtles, "by "the wolves and tigers who ſurround the king, who "carry off the patrimony of the ſtate, break down "the moſt ſacred barriers, and deſpiſe every conſi- "deration, except their own intereſt (74)." The firſt nobility were not aſhamed to tamper with the inferior miniſters of the law, to ſolicit their favor, to buy their ſuffrages, and even perſonally to waſte whole days in ſo diſgraceful an occupation. "The "nobles," ſays L'Hopital, "forget the dignity of "their rank ſo far, as to place themſelves, before "break of day, at the door of a vile ſecretary; "they accompany him to the court of law; remain "near him; expoſe themſelves to the inſults of the "croud aſſembled below the bar; and attend him "in the evening to his own houſe (75)." Nor did the men alone deſcend to theſe baſe and ſcandalous arts, to pervert the courſe of juſtice; ladies of the higheſt quality emulated them in rapacity, importunity, and ſolicitation. "The moſt obſtinate con- "teſts," exclaims the ſame virtuous magiſtrate, in another place, "which I am obliged to maintain, "are not againſt the men: the women reſiſt much "more ſtrongly, and do not ſo eaſily abandon the "ſtruggle (76)."

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Solicitation of the nobility.

Rapacity of the women of the court.

If it could be neceſſary to confirm a teſtimony ſo unqueſtionable, the Memoirs of Tavannes contain ample proof of the enormities committed in all the provincial tribunals, as well as in thoſe of the capital (77). "The doctors in law," ſays he, "have

(74) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. p. 235.
(75) Ibid. vol. i. p. 138.
(76) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. Eclairciſſements, p. 17.
(77) Tavannes, p. 34.

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Tribunals of law.

"prolonged the period of ſtudy, requiſite for entering on the diſcharge of judicial functions, to ten years, in order to exclude the nobility from participating in their enormous depredations."—"The number of officers employed in the adminiſtration of juſtice and finance, do not fall ſhort of fifty thouſand."—"All the judges, having purchaſed their ſeats, make no ſcruple of receiving bribes circuitouſly, which clerks, ſolicitors, and others, preſent to their wives and ſervants (78)." Montluc pathetically laments, that the nobility, by diſdaining to occupy judicial and municipal offices, as they had done at the beginning of the ſixteenth century, had thrown away one very eſſential ſource of conſideration and power (79.)

Separation of the military, and judicial character.

It was not till the year 1560, in the States General held at Orleans, that a complete and total ſeparation was made between the long and the ſhort robe; or, in modern language, between the ſword and the gown. Previous to that æra, Bailiffs and Senechals, though not verſed in juriſprudence, or bred to the profeſſion of law as a ſcience, yet decided on queſtions of life and property (80).

Duration of ſuits at law.

The duration of ſuits was one of the moſt pernicious conſequences of the general corruption of juſtice; and the litigious ſpirit which diſtinguiſhed the times, rendered the evil more ſevere in its operation. All ranks of men were infected with it; and the chicane practiſed to protract deciſions, rendered the proceedings eternal. Families buried their whole eſtates in ruinous conteſts with each other, and paſſed their lives in ſoliciting, purchaſing, and corrupting the judges. L'Hopital draws a ſtriking and affecting picture of the extent of this

(78) Tavannes, p. 287.
(79) Memoires de Mont. vol. iv. p. 10.
(80) L'Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 648.

calamity.

calamity (81). Henry the Third, when he made the eloquent and pathetic harangue, with which he opened the States General, in 1588, infiſts at great length upon the magnitude and enormity of the evils, proceeding from the delays and procraſtinations of courts of law; and recommends it as an object of the moſt ſerious attention to the national repreſentatives (82). But, they were too deeply engaged in faction, to attempt the reformation of juſtice.

Forgeries.

Among the extraordinary crimes and abuſes practiſed in that age, to corrupt or to pervert the courſe of juſtice, muſt be reckoned the fabrication of the great ſeal itſelf. A ſecretary of the court of chancery, named Mornat, aided by another accomplice, undertook to affix a counterfeit ſeal to the warrants iſſued. He executed it with ſo much dexterity and ſucceſs, that in a very ſhort ſpace of time, he acquired between five and ſix thouſand crowns. When diſcovered, he eſcaped the puniſhment due to his crime, by a precipitate flight into Germany; but, his confederate, leſs vigilant, was ſeized and executed. This event took place under Charles the Ninth, during the period when l'Hopital was chancellor (83).

Confiſcations.

Confiſcations were another of the modes by which wealth was obtained, more ſafely, but, hardly more honorably, under the laſt princes of Valois. Henry the Second preſented to his miſtreſs, Diana de Poitiers, all the effects ſeized or ſequeſtered from the Hugonots, for hereſy. It amounted to a prodigious ſum; and the donation did not tend to retard or diminiſh the proceedings againſt the Proteſtants (84). Henry had given her, at his acceſſion,

(81) Trad de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 137—144; and vol. ii. p. 56—62.
(82) De Thou, vol. x. p. 378 and 379, and p. 387.
(83) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap Fran. p. 83—85.
(84) D'Aub Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 83.

in

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in 1547, the money arising from the confirmation of offices throughout France, which were always renewed at the commencement of every reign (85). Under his son, Charles the Ninth, a new species of confiscation was introduced by Gondi, marshal de Retz, a Florentine; which long continued to be practised. Not only persons convicted of treason, or other crimes of state, but, men of every description, were liable, at death, to have their houses, property, and effects, seized on, by order of the crown, and lavished from their legal heirs, upon the slightest pretences. The old, rich, and infirm, were objects of unremitting attention to the rapacious courtiers; who often obtained a grant of their property, and kept a watchful eye upon their future prey. L'Hopital, at an early period of his life, introduces the cardinal of Lorrain, his patron, in one of his epistles, thus addressing him: "Observe "the houses of the dying, and on the first accident "write to me, or come to me in person: be assured in that case, of the royal favor, and of mine; "but, take care, that no one more alert, anticipate "you: don't lose sight of the beds of the sick (86)." When Mazille, first physician to Henry the Third, lay expiring, in 1578, the minions did not even wait till he was dead, to divide his spoils. Camus, a master of requests, was dispatched to take an inventory of his effects, which was done in the presence of the favorites to whom they were given. It does not appear, that Mazille had committed any sort of crime, unless the one of being suspected to lean towards the reformed religion. His only real crime consisted in his reputed wealth, which was estimated at ten thousand crowns (87).

Seizure of private effects.

Examples of this practice.

(85) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 9 and 10.
(86) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 87.
(87) Mem. pour ser. à l'Hist. de Fr. p. 101.

The

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The torture was indiſcriminately adminiſtered in the ſixteenth century, to priſoners of every rank, in its utmoſt violence, and at the arbitrary pleaſure of the magiſtrate. It was not even conſidered as any act of indecency, for ſovereigns to be preſent at ſuch a ſcene. Henry the Third, in 1582, aſſiſted, behind a curtain, during the depoſition of Salcede, who was put to the torture (88). Not only kings, but queens, and the ladies of the court, were accuſtomed to regard executions, as a ſpectacle of ſtate, which excited little emotion. The genius of the age, ſanguinary and ferocious, diminiſhed, if it did not extinguiſh the horror, naturally produced by the apparatus of puniſhment and death. The public and magnificent entry of Henry the Second into Paris, in 1549, was ſolemnized by exhibitions of this nature. Several Hugonots expiated the crime of hereſy; and Henry was a ſpectator of their ſufferings. Florent Venot, one of them, had been previouſly confined for ſix weeks, in an engine, formed like a ſugar-loaf, and pointed at its baſe (89). After the conſpiracy of Amboiſe, Francis the Second; his brothers, who were ſtill in a ſtate of childhood; and all the princeſſes and ladies aſſiſted, as at a pageant, when Caſtelnau, and his accomplices, were put to death. A platform was conſtructed under the windows of the caſtle, to facilitate the view of the ceremony (90). That the ſentiments of compaſſion and terror, connected by nature with the ſight of a barbarous execution, could not be entirely ſubverted by cuſtom, or faſhion, is, notwithſtanding, evident, from the example of Leonora d'Humieres. She was the wife of William de Montmorenci, one of the younger ſons of the conſtable; and having gone, in March,

Torture.

Executions.

The court aſſiſted at them.

(88) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 636.
(89) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 75.
(90) Ibid. vol. i. p. 94.

1563,

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1563, together with the other ladies of the court, to see the execution of Poltrot, who was torn to pieces by horses, on the "Place de Greve," at Paris; she was so overcome with her emotions, as to faint away, and expire soon afterwards (91).

Death of Salcede.

It is equally clear, that the fate of this lady, the result of sensibility, did not produce any alteration in the mode of frequenting punishments. When Salcede, in 1582, suffered by the same species of death, which had been inflicted upon the assassin of Francis, duke of Guise; an apartment at the town-house was fitted up, and ornamented expressly for the royal family (92). Henry the Third, his queen, and Catherine of Medicis, were present at the performance (93). The king not only regarded, but, directed the manner of it; and at the intercession of the duchess of Mercœur, who was allied to Salcede, he abbreviated that criminal's torments, by causing him to be strangled (94). His head was sent to Antwerp; as that of Coligni, in 1572, if we may believe D'Aubigné, had been carried to Rome (95). The embassador of Philip the Second having, with some acrimony, remonstrated with Henry, on his sending Salcede's head to be exposed in a city, where he had not the smallest right to command as sovereign; the king, somewhat embarrassed, replied, "I have forwarded it to my brother, to use his pleasure respecting it, if he pleases (96)." History has not disdained to commemorate, that the invention and use of gags is due to the age of which we are treating; and it is a characteristic circumstance. They were first known in 1560, and used in

Gags.

(91) Le Labour. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 220.
(92) L'Etoile, p. 55.
(93) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 636.
(94) L'Etoile, p. 54 and 55. Busbeq. letter 8th.
(95) D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. ii. p. 17.
(96) Busbeq. p. 64. letter 9th.

Dauphiné,

Dauphiné, to prevent the Hugonot miniſters from exhorting, or converting the people (97). CHAP. II.

It was not only in the magiſtracy, and all the courts of civil and criminal juſtice, that venality was introduced and eſtabliſhed. It had pervaded every department, and polluted every charge, or employment. De Thou juſtly attributes to ſo nefarious a practice, which excluded merit, talents, and ſervices, the univerſal depravity of manners under Henry the Third, and the final ruin of that prince's affairs. It had attained a pitch of enormity, beyond which it ſeemed impoſſible to advance (98). The higheſt offices of truſt and dignity were publickly expoſed to ſale, without diſguiſe; and the ſovereign frequently purchaſed them of his own ſubjects and courtiers. When Joyeuſe was appointed governor of Normandy in 1583, he could not take poſſeſſion of the province, till he had bargained for the ceſſion of the principal cities and fortreſſes, with thoſe, to whom they had been committed. Exhauſted by the ſums requiſite to be expended, and unable to ſatisfy D'O, commander of the caſtle of Caen; Joyeuſe was neceſſitated, beſides paying a conſiderable part of the purchaſe in money, to place him in the poſt of ſuperintendant of the finances, from which he had been antecedently removed, for the moſt criminal malverſation and incapacity. Henry conſented to a transfer, ſo pernicious to his people (99). In the following year, he condeſcended to importune the duke of Mayenne, to part with the office of admiral of France; which he likewiſe conferred upon Joyeuſe. Forty thouſand crowns were given for it; but, Mayenne expreſſed the utmoſt reluctance to comply, and only did ſo in the laſt extremity. His brother, the duke of Guiſe, withſtood all the ſolici-

Univerſal venality.

Examples. Joyeuſe.

Mayenne.

Guiſe.

(97) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 99.
(98) De Thou, vol. x. p. 676.
(99) Ibid. vol. ix. p. 80.

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tations of the king, and peremptorily refuſed to quit, or ſell, on any conditions, the charge which he occupied, of lord-ſteward of the houſehold (100).

Governments.

The inferior officers imitated the example of the great. Henry, king of Navarre, having demanded, in 1589, at the time of his treaty with the crown, a place of ſecurity upon the Loire, for the paſſage of his troops, it became requiſite to cede to him either Saumur, or the Pont de Cé. But, Coſſeins, who commanded in the latter fortreſs, refuſed to evacuate it, for a ſmaller ſum, than a penſion of fifty thouſand crowns. De Leſſart, governor of Saumur, was not ſo unreaſonable; and in order to render him more accommodating, the king of Navarre did not heſitate to offer, nor De Leſſart bluſh to accept, a bribe of three thouſand crowns (101).

Priſoners.

Even the priſoners whom Henry had arreſted at Blois, after the aſſaſſination of the Guiſes; and whom he had entruſted to Le Guaſt, a captain in his guards, governor of Amboiſe; he was reduced to purchaſe again of his own officer, within a few weeks. Such was the faithleſs and venal temper of the age. Fifteen thouſand crowns were paid to Le Guaſt, from the royal treaſury, for the perſons of the cardinal of Bourbon, the prince of Joinville, ſon to the late duke of Guiſe, and the duke of Elbeuf. He was likewiſe permitted to retain, and to appropriate to himſelf, the ranſoms to be derived from the liberty of the archbiſhop of Lyons, and ſeveral other captives, who remained in his poſſeſſion (102).

Pernicious effects of thoſe practices.

"I have ſeen," ſays Tavannes, "eight or "ten governments propoſed to be ſold, in order to "form a party againſt the ſovereign himſelf: the "buyers felt no ſcruple in defrauding the ſoldiers of

(100) Davila, p. 500.
(101) De Thou, vol. x. p. 591.
(102) Ibid. p. 509 and 510.

"their

" their pay, and in laying exactions upon the mer-
" chants and people, in order to reimburſe them-
" ſelves the intereſt of their money (103)." Such was the total diſſolution of all authority, or obedience, that ſubjects preſumed even to impoſe regular contributions in the provinces, by virtue of their mandate. Buſſy d'Amboiſe, when commanding in the caſtle of Angers, in 1579, which conſtituted part of the eſtabliſhment of the duke of Anjou, was accuſtomed to exact very heavy taxes from the citizens, and from the inhabitants of the duchy, frequently without conſulting, or obtaining permiſſion either from the duke his maſter, or from the king (104). It would be eaſy to cite ſimilar inſtances of oppreſſion, committed under a reign, when the facility, prodigality, and apathy of the prince, encouraged every abuſe; when impunity accompanied the greateſt crimes; and when the deſpotiſm of the crown was the ſmalleſt evil, to which the unhappy people were expoſed.

Abuſes and oppreſſions.

(103) Tavannes, p. 266.
(104) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 90.

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CHAP. III.

State of the Gallican church.—Immunities of the clergy.—Revenues.—Taxes, levied on the eccleſiaſtical property.—Alienations.—Abuſes.—Pluralities—Sale of preferments.—Depravity of the great eccleſiaſtics.—Inſtitution of the penitents.—Proceſſions.—Seditious ſermons.—Aſylums.—State of the Hugonots.—Internal form of their civil government.—Numbers and reſources.—Military, and naval force.—Commerce.—Intolerance of the age.—Mutual acts of violence and cruelty, between Catholics and Proteſtants.—Perverſion of the human mind, on matters of religion.—Examples of toleration.—State of the king of Navarre.—His territories, power, and reſources.—Court of Navarre.

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State of the church.

THE Catholic church, in whatever point of view we conſider it, with regard to its ſpiritual authority, its immunities, or its revenues, was an object of the firſt magnitude and conſideration, during the ſixteenth century. Notwithſtanding the vaſt defalcation from the poſſeſſions of the ſee of Rome, occaſioned by the revolt of Luther, the Papal power continued ſtill to be extremely formidable, in all the countries which perſiſted to acknowledge its ſupremacy. The French hierarchy might be ſaid, in ſome meaſure, to conſtitute a monarchy within the ſtate itſelf; governed by its laws; amenable to its own juriſdiction; contributing from its proper and diſtinct reſources; and profeſſing obedience to a diſtant and ſuperior ſovereign. Although, from the reſiſtance made by the Parliaments, the decrees of the council of Trent, which declared the independ-

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ance of the clergy on the civil magiſtrate, and the inability of the crown to tax the eccleſiaſtical property, had never been publiſhed, nor recognized in France; yet, the validity of thoſe regulations was not the leſs rigorouſly aſſerted by the Romiſh pontiffs. The age itſelf was by no means liberated from, or ſuperior to, the influence of a ſuperſtitious veneration for the ſacerdotal office and character; nor had the thunders of the Vatican ceaſed to unnerve the arm of princes, and to ſuſpend their boldeſt determinations. It is difficult, or impoſſible to mark the preciſe limits of a power, which, in an eſpecial degree, was founded on opinion, and maintained by religious terror; but, we may pronounce, that, however on its decline, it continued ſtill to operate, and to affect the deliberations of the wiſeſt and moſt vigorous cabinets. When Sixtus the Fifth, in the inſolence of the apoſtolic authority, publiſhed an excommunication againſt Henry the Third, in 1589, that prince was ſo deeply wounded by it, that he could neither be induced to eat or drink, for more than forty hours. Univerſal ſadneſs and dejection appeared in the army, even while advancing rapidly and proſperouſly towards Paris. Their operations were ſlackened; and all the efforts of the archbiſhop of Bourges to diminiſh the king's uneaſineſs, were ineffectual. He complained, that the emperor Charles the Fifth, who had impiouſly ſacked Rome, and detained in priſon the ſacred perſon of the Pope himſelf, had not been ſo ſeverely treated. "But, "ſire," replied the king of Navarre, "that mo- "narch was victorious: if we conquer, the cen- "ſures will be revoked: if we are worſted by the "enemy, we ſhall die excommunicated (1)." Even in the article of death, Boulogne, Henry's chaplain, would not give him abſolution, till he had ſolemnly

Eccleſiaſtical power.

Papal authority, and conſideration.

(1) Davila, p. 811.

profeſſed

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profeſſed his reſolution to obey the Papal mandate, and to releaſe the cardinal of Bourbon and the archbiſhop of Lyons, though their liberation ſhould coſt him his life and crown (2). Scarcely greater deference could have been manifeſted for the pontifical character and orders, in the darkeſt period of the middle ages.

Immunities of the clergy.

The immunities and privileges of the clergy were not only ample, but, a degree of ſanctity ſurrounded, and protected them from invaſion. Superſtition, more powerful than any written law, withheld the ſword of juſtice, and arreſted the dagger of the aſſaſſin. Prelates and cardinals were regarded as beings ſeparated from the maſs of mankind, and as hardly amenable to any ſecular tribunal. When Henry embraced the determination of ſacrificing the duke of Guiſe, inſtruments of his vengeance were readily found; but, it was much more difficult to procure men who would imbrue their hands in the blood of a member of the ſacred college. Recourſe was had to inferior miniſters, for the purpoſe. Four common ſoldiers, each of whom received fifty crowns, diſpatched him with their halberds, on the refuſal of the band of forty-five, compoſed of gentlemen, to perpetrate a deed, eſteemed ſo impious (3). It was not for the murder of the duke, but, for that of the cardinal, that the indignation of the holy ſee was manifeſted; and while Sixtus treated the former as an act of ſtate, excuſed, if not juſtified by the circumſtances which produced it, he affected to conſider the death of one cardinal, and the detention of another, as a crime equally enormous and irremiſſible (4).

Their ſuppoſed ſanctity.

Exemption from ordinary juriſdiction.

Nor were the great eccleſiaſtics protected only in their lives and freedom, by the privileges of the

(2) Davila, p. 818. De Thou, vol. x. p. 673.
(3) Davila, p. 751. Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 259. De Thou, vol. x. p. 478. (4) Davila, p. 770.

order

order to which they belonged. They pretended to be exempt from appearing, or anſwering before any court, except that of Rome, even in caſes of treaſon. The archbiſhop of Lyons, arreſted as an accomplice of the Guiſes, in December, 1588, refuſed to anſwer interrogations, and pleaded his ſuperiority to any temporal, or ſpiritual juriſdiction in France. Henry aſſembled the privy council; and they determined, on the ſtrength of many weighty precedents, that as the crime laid to his charge exceeded the powers annexed to the eccleſiaſtical judges, he might be brought before the civil magiſtrate. The archbiſhop perſiſted nevertheleſs in his ſilence, and declined acknowledging the right either of the parliament, the peers, or the ſovereign, to bring him to trial (5). We may judge of the dangerous and unlimited nature of the clerical pretenſions, in that age, by the famous decree of the Sorbonne. A college compoſed of only ſixty doctors in theology, conſulted by the heads of the League, in January, 1589, had the audacity to declare the oath of allegiance void, and to authorize the aſſumption of arms againſt their legitimate prince. So bold and unanimous a deciſion had no inconſiderable effect in exciting, and confirming the rebellion, which took place throughout the kingdom (6).

College of the Sorbonne. Its weight.

Powers and pretenſions ſo vaſt and undefined, were ſuſtained by adequate revenues. It is difficult, if not impoſſible, to form any accurate eſtimate of the value of the lands poſſeſſed by the church, throughout France; but, we know that they included a large proportion of all the property of the country, together with extenſive feudal authority over their vaſſals. A Proteſtant writer of the time

Revenues of the clergy.

(5) De Thou, vol. x. p. 480 and 481.
(6) Ibid. p. 511 and 512. Satyre Menip. vol. iii. p. 361, 362.

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of Henry the Third, asserts, that they produced twenty millions of livres, or near nine hundred thousand pounds, annual income. He adds, that France contained six hundred and fifty abbies, of the orders of St. Bernard and St. Benedict; besides above two thousand, five hundred priories (7). In some instances, the episcopal jurisdiction seemed to have arrogated, or extinguished the functions most inseparable from royalty. The bishops of Mende in the province of the Gevaudan, enjoyed, by antient prescription and agreement, the right of parity with the sovereign. Justice was administered in their joint names, and the bishop struck money, as an independant prince (8). It is, however, unquestionable, that the French kings claimed and exercised the right of levying taxes from the clergy of their dominions; and it is equally certain, that the latter virtually acknowledged, by their submission, the validity of the royal prerogative. Four tenths, or "decimes," constituted the ordinary annual contribution, under the three last kings of the house of Valois (9). To what sum they amounted, it is hard to say; but, we may conclude, that they did not fall short of nine hundred thousand livres a year, or, about forty thousand pounds; because we find that between 1560 and 1575, including fifteen years, the crown had drawn from the order of ecclesiastics, full fifteen millions of livres (10).

Civil power.

Taxes levied on ecclesiastics.

Besides these regular impositions, extraordinary aids were frequently demanded, and obtained. Two, three, and even four "decimes" were, on particular occasions, exacted from the clergy, above the customary contribution, without any application being made to the see of Rome for its approbation;

Extraordinary aids.

(7) La Noue, p. 357. (8) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 601.
(9) Lettres de Paul de Foix, lettre 49, p. 539.
(10) Near six hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 296.

and

and without any attempt on the part of the church to refuſe obedience, or to withhold payment (11). The Romiſh pontiffs, unable to prevent, did not the leſs reſiſt and deny the right of the crown, to draw any pecuniary aid whatever from the clergy, even under the moſt preſſing national calamities, unleſs by the Papal grant and permiſſion. That the pretenſion, however arrogant and abſurd, was not altogether viſionary or deſtitute of exiſtence, is not to be denied; ſince, in 1582, Henry the Third, having demanded and obtained one "decime" only, beyond the ordinary number; made, by his embaſſador at the court of Rome, the ſtrongeſt exertions to obtain the diſpenſation of Gregory the Thirteenth, for thus invading the eccleſiaſtical property. He urged, that it was indiſpenſable, as he was on the point of renewing the alliance with the Helvetic confederacy; and could not conclude it, without paying the arrears of the penſions due to the Switzers, and making the accuſtomed preſents to the Cantons. Theſe reaſons, however plauſible, or ſolid, produced no impreſſion on the pontiff, who pertinaciouſly refuſed to give any ſanction to a proceeding, derogatory to the power of the Papal ſee, and to the independance of the French clergy on the crown. He even founded his refuſal, on the indirect approval, which his conſent to levy a fifth "decime" might be conſtrued to convey, of the right in the kings of France to exact the four, annually received. Henry, however, did not fail to levy the tax in queſtion (12).

Reſiſtance of the popes to the taxation of the clergy.

But, although the royal power was competent to compel the eccleſiaſtical body to contribute, like the other ſubjects, ordinarily and extraordinarily, towards the wants of the ſtate; there was another ſpecies of contribution, ſometimes demanded from

Alienation of the lands of the church.

(11) Lettres de Foix, p. 539.
(12) Ibid. p. 534—542, and 552—554.

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the clergy, to which the crown was totally inadequate to enforce ſubmiſſion, without the expreſs and formal conſent of the ſovereign pontiffs. Even the ſanction of the Parliaments and States General could not give it efficacy, if the ſupreme head of the church withheld his permiſſion. The alienation of the domain, or lands belonging to the clergy, was a reſource, to which the calamities and poverty, produced by the civil wars, neceſſitated the French kings to apply, more than once. There were no leſs than five diſtinct and ſeparate alienations of the temporalities of the church, between the acceſſion of Charles the Ninth, in 1560, and the cloſe of his brother's reign, in 1589; and we cannot eſtimate their aggregate amount, at a ſmaller annual ſum than two hundred thouſand crowns (13). It is not eaſy to aſcertain the ſum of money levied by the ſale of lands; more particularly, as in the diſordered ſtate of the finances, every peculation was practiſed with impunity. A bull from the court of Rome was publiſhed, to give validity to each act of alienation; and Pius the Fifth, when he ſignified his aſſent, in 1568, to one, for ſelling lands to the value of twenty-five thouſand crowns a-year, annexed to it the clauſe, that "the money could only "be employed againſt the Proteſtants (14)." His ſucceſſor, Gregory the Thirteenth, peremptorily refuſed the duke of Joyeuſe, deputed for that purpoſe, to allow of any diminution of the eccleſiaſtical property (15). Even, after the Papal approbation obtained by Henry the Third, in 1586, for alienating fifty thouſand crowns of the church revenues; the clergy, by the mouth of the biſhop of Noyon, as their repreſentative, did not heſitate to

Papal approbation, indiſpenſable.

Reſiſtance of the clergy.

(13) L'Etoile, p. 89 and 90. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 293. Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 52 and 53.

(14) Trad. de l' Hop. ibid. (15) Buſbeq. letter 24. p. 154.

make

make the boldeſt reclamations againſt the royal ty- CHAP. III.
ranny; and to ſtate as a crime, that the French princes, ſince the acceſſion of Francis the Firſt, had pretended to make the eccleſiaſtics tributary. The harangue was pronounced before the parliament of Paris; and though it excited the indignation of that court, yet no reſentment ſeems to have been expreſſed by the king, for ſo extraordinary a reſiſtance to his edicts (16).

Enormous abuſes, of various kinds, had crept in- Abuſes.
to the Gallican church, during the courſe of the ſixteenth century; and they naturally augmented under ſo profligate and licentious a reign, as that of the laſt of the princes of Valois. In 1579, no leſs than twenty-eight biſhoprics were vacant, the temporalities of which were poſſeſſed by laymen, and where the ſervice was altogether neglected. In ſome provinces, ſcarcely a biſhop was to be found, who reſided in his dioceſe; and the abbeys were in the ſame predicament (17). A commiſſion, armed with very ample powers of enquiry, and authorized to puniſh or to redreſs all miſconduct in eccleſiaſtics of every rank, was ſent from the crown, throughout France, in that year. But, it may be much doubted, whether the attempt was productive of reform or benefit (18). The practice of naming gen- Nominatio of laics, to benefices.
tlemen, ſoldiers, and children, to church preferments, was not only common; but, ſanctioned by the ſee of Rome, in many inſtances. We find Gregory the Thirteenth, though otherwiſe a pontiff of decent, and even ſevere manners, yet permitting theſe nominations. In 1582, he confirmed the grand prior of Champagne, a knight of Malta, in the abbey of La Trappe (19). It is true, that he

(16) L'Etoile, p. 89 and 90.
(17) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 93.
(18) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 607.
(19) Lettres de Foix, p. 256 and 257.

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objected to naming a monk, whom the French embaſſador recommended, to the biſhopric of Agde in Languedoc, becauſe it was notorious, that the revenues of the ſee had been, for many years, ſequeſtered to the uſe of marſhal Montmorenci. But, he voluntarily propoſed to confirm the ſame monk in the epiſcopal dignity, and to aſſign a conſiderable portion of the temporalities to a natural ſon of Montmorenci (20). Brantome, ſo celebrated for his Memoirs, which ſufficiently prove him to have been a diſſolute courtier, deſtitute of morals, was provided by Henry the Second, with the abbey of his own name, in the province of Perigord. "The king "gave it to me," ſays he, "when I was very young, "in recompence for my brother's head, which was "carried off by a cannon ball, at the ſiege of Heſdin. "I have always governed it ſo well, that in three "changes of abbots, ſucceſſively named by the kings "of France, and confirmed by the popes, no fault "has been found. It is only worth three thouſand "livres annual revenue, of which I am obliged to "give conſiderably more than half to the abbot, "who is, likewiſe, compelled to pay very large "taxes, and to make conſiderable repairs. One of "my abbots, a moſt worthy man, was poiſoned; "but, the king, underſtanding that I was ſtill alive, "refuſed to diſpoſe of the abbey (21)." Theſe eccleſiaſtical preferments were conſidered by the ſovereign, as a mode for providing for the gentlemen and officers, who grew old in the military ſervice, or in attendance on the court. They were frequently conferred on men of letters. Philibert de Lorme, the architect of the Tuilleries, was rewarded with a donation of the abbey of Livry, in the vicinity of Paris (22). Ronſard, the poet, received from the

Inſtances.

(20) Lettres de Foix, letter 52, p. 580.
(21) Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 264—267.
(22) Vide de Ronſard, p. 144.

bounty

bounty of Charles the Ninth, the priory of St. Come in Touraine, at which he died (23). Desportes, who was equally beloved by Henry, his brother, poſſeſſed the three abbeys of Joſaphat, Bonport, and Vanne (24). In 1588, Henry the Third recommended to the States, in his ſpeech from the throne, the reformation of an abuſe, which favoured ſo ſtrongly of impiety (25).

Profanations far greater were committed, if we may credit the beſt contemporary writers. Ladies became poſſeſſed of dignities or benefices in the church. The council of ſtate was not aſhamed, in 1579, to adjudge a biſhopric to a woman of diſtinction; and they were regarded as conſtituting a portion of inheritance, in families (26). Children received them, while ſtill in infancy (27). In the firſt year of his reign, Henry the Third, on his arrival in France, from Poland, conferred the two epiſcopal ſees, of Amiens and Grenoble, vacant by the death of the cardinal of Crequy, on du Gua, one of his favorites, who had the profligacy to diſpoſe of them again by ſale: for the former, he procured near thirteen hundred pounds; and for the latter, above ſeventeen hundred (28). The decency and dignity of religion were hardly leſs attacked, by the pluralities common among the great eccleſiaſtics. We cannot, without aſtoniſhment, read of the number of preferments held by one perſon, who was often a foreigner or reſident in other countries. Hyppolito, cardinal of Ferrara, held eight abbeys in different parts of France (29). The famous cardinal du Bellay, who died at Rome, in 1560, was archbiſhop of Bourdeaux, and biſhop

Profanations.

Sale of biſhoprics.

Pluralities.

(23) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 413.
(24) L'Etoile, p. 88. Journal d'Henry IV. vol. i. p. 157.
(25) De Thou, vol. x. p. 387. (26) Ibid. vol. viii. p. 93 and 94.
(27) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de France, p. 97.
(28) Ibid. p. 47 and 48. (29) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 795.

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of Paris, Mans, and Limoges (30). Beſides the archiepiſcopal ſee of Rheims, and the biſhopric of Mentz, the cardinal of Lorrain was poſſeſſed of many abbeys and inferior benefices (31).

Diſſolution of manners.

The vices naturally connected with wealth, characterized the ſuperior clergy, and completed, by their bad example, the general diſſolution of manners. Louis, cardinal of Guiſe, who died in 1578, was notorious for debaucheries, epicuriſm, and gluttony (32). From his inordinate love of wine, he was commonly called in deriſion, "Le Cardinal

Examples.

"des Bouteilles." Of his nephew, the ſecond cardinal of Guiſe, put to death at Blois, Sixtus the Fifth himſelf ſaid, that "he had nothing of a car-"dinal, except the hat." Not ſatisfied with diſgracing his profeſſion by every ſpecies of profligacy and immorality; he did not heſitate to put himſelf at the head of four hundred lancemen, and to engage in enterprizes equally ſanguinary and treaſonable (33). The duke of Epernon reproached the archbiſhop of Lyons, in the preſence of the king himſelf, with living in an open ſtate of inceſtuous commerce with his own ſiſter, and making a ſhameful traffic of every thing ſacred in his dioceſe. So avowed were the facts, that the prelate did not even pretend to deny them, although he reſented

Du Perron.

their diſcloſure (34). Du Perron, who roſe by his talents and graces, to the higheſt dignities of the Romiſh church, made no ſcruple of proſtituting his genius, to immortalize the profligate and adulterous amours of Margaret of Valois, queen of

(30) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 18.

(31) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 278.

(32) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 645. Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra, p. 91.

(33) Lettre du Car. de Joyeuſe, dans les Mem. de Villeroi, vol. ii. p. 209—211. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 111.

(34) De Thou, vol. x. p. 238. Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 183 and 184.

Navarre.

Navarre. In 1574, he compoſed ſome elegant verſes, at that princeſs's requeſt, in the nature of a monody, upon the death of her lover, La Mole, executed by order of Charles the Ninth (35). Nine years afterwards, in November, 1583, the ſame eccleſiaſtic, at the table of the king, where a croud of courtiers were preſent; maintained, by many ſolid arguments, the exiſtence of a Deity, and demonſtrated the folly of Atheiſm. Pleaſed with his diſcourſe, Henry commended it with the warmeſt marks of approbation. "Sire," ſaid du Perron, "I have, to-day, proved that there is a God: to-morrow, if it ſhall pleaſe your majeſty to grant me audience, I will evince, by reaſons equally good, that there is none." Impiety of his conduct. Diſſolute and relaxed as was Henry the Third in certain parts of his conduct, he expreſſed the utmoſt horror at ſuch a propoſition, and commanded du Perron inſtantly to quit his preſence (36).

We may ſee in the manifeſto of marſhal Montmorenci, publiſhed in November, 1574, to what a point the vices of the great eccleſiaſtics had infected the whole order, and how total was the abandonment and venality of the clergy throughout France (37). Depravity and abuſes. The depravity of the monaſtic orders was not leſs notorious. In 1577, a common proſtitute was diſcovered in the convent of the Cordeliers, at Paris, who had remained ten years concealed among thoſe holy fathers (38). Under the reigns of the three ſons of Henry the Second, it was not uncommon to ſee prelates of the higheſt rank, who continued to retain their preferments, though well known to have renounced the Catholic religion. Brantome enumerates ſeveral, who did not ceaſe to exerciſe the epiſcopal functions, after embracing

(35) Vie de Marg. p. 137.
(36) L'Etoile, p. 73.
(37) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 134.
(38) L'Etoile, p. 26 and 27.

Calviniſm,

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Calviniſm, or Lutheraniſm (39). Odet de Chatillon, brother to Coligni, a cardinal, archbiſhop of Toulouſe, and biſhop of Beauvais, not only perſiſted to hold thoſe dignities after he had become a Hugonot; but, he publicly ſolemnized his marriage with a lady of the court. She was even received as his wife, in the drawing-room of Catherine of Medicis; and was ſeated in the preſence of the queen-mother, as a peereſs, in her quality of counteſs of Beauvais. The common people denominated her "Madame la Cardinale (40)." Theſe relaxations of diſcipline were, however, reluctantly tolerated by the French kings, from motives of policy, or neceſſity.

Inſtitution of penitents.

A phenomenon, reſerved for the time of Henry the Third, was the appearance and inſtitution of the penitents. In the beginning of his reign, during his ſtay at Avignon, in 1574, he firſt ſaw, and aſſociated himſelf to the confraternity. There were three ſorts, diſtinguiſhed by their reſpective colors. Thoſe of the king, were white; thoſe of the queen-mother, black; and the blue belonged to the cardinal of Armagnac. Catherine of Medicis, and even the young king of Navarre, afterwards Henry the Fourth, mixed in theſe cavalcades, covered with a ſack. The cardinal of Lorrain loſt his life by following their example, bareheaded, and barefoot; he was ſeized in conſequence, with a violent fever on the brain, of which he expired (41). Notwithſtanding the king's natural propenſity to encourage ſuch mummeries, by his preſence and exhortations; yet, the manly and ſpirited remonſtrances of Chriſtopher de Thou, firſt preſident of the Parliament of

Oppoſition made to them.

(39) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 262, and 263; and vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 258 and 259.

(40) Ibid. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 354—356. Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. p. 37.

(41) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 164 and 165. L'Etoile, p. 9 and 10.

Paris,

Paris, prevented their complete reception and eſta- CHAP. III.
bliſhment, for ſeveral years. That able and upright magiſtrate repreſented to his ſovereign, the pernicious tendency of ceremonies, only calculated to extinguiſh, among the lower orders, the ſpirit of real piety, diſcipline, and obedience to the civil authority. It was not till after his deceaſe, that Henry, in the following year, 1583, yielding to his inclinations, inſtituted a confraternity of penitents at Paris; gave them rules; and rendered them permanent. It is hard to ſay, whether devotion, hypocriſy, or weakneſs of mind, were the predominant movements, by which he was influenced; but, it can admit of no doubt, that the inſtitution tended to degrade and vilify him in the eſtimation of his ſubjects, and of mankind (42).

Prelates, noblemen, members of the long robe, and citizens, were all admitted and invited to become members of the ſociety of Penitents. Their dreſs was a ſort of ſack, which concealed completely the wearer, leaving only two holes cut in the hood, in order to enable him to ſee his way. On the left ſhoulder was a croſs of white ſattin. White linen compoſed the materials of the ſack itſelf, and it deſcended to the feet (43). Wrapt in this diſguiſe, Henry the Third marched in ſlow proceſſion, through the principal ſtreets of his own capital, undiſtinguiſhed from the other penitents. During the remainder of his reign, the ceremony was continually repeated; and it laſted during the greater part of the night, accompanied with muſic, and followed by multitudes of people. Cardinals, minions, magiſtrates, and perſons of every deſcription, compoſed the cavalcade, which was not exempt from many diſorders and indecencies (44). It ſeems

Their dreſs.

Proceſſions.

(42) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 68 and 69. L'Etoile, p. 64—67.
(43) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 32 and 33.
(44) Ibid. vol. i. p. 32—34. L'Etoile, p. 64—67. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 46.

ſcarcely

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ſcarcely credible, that the king ſhould voluntarily debaſe the majeſty of the throne ſo far, as to go on foot, in the habit of a penitent, from Paris to Chartres, and return in the ſame groteſque diſguiſe, accompanied by about ſixty of his companions. He performed this ſpecies of pilgrimage, in March, 1586 (45). Felix Perretti, who had raiſed himſelf from the condition of a private monk, to the chair of St. Peter; could not reſtrain the emotions of his contempt, at a conduct ſo unworthy of a great monarch. "I have done my utmoſt," ſaid he, "to "liberate myſelf from the monaſtic profeſſion; and "the king of France exerts his endeavours to enter "into it." Even the pages and lacqueys of the court were ſenſible to the ridicule attending the proceſſions of penitents; and Henry cauſed near a hundred and twenty of them, who had counterfeited the ceremony and the dreſs, to be ſeverely chaſtized in the kitchens of the Louvre (46.)

Pilgrimages.

Ridicule of them.

So contagious, notwithſtanding, was the example exhibited by the ſovereign, and ſo diſpoſed was the age to every ſort of ſuperſtition; that the people in the provinces ſpeedily imitated the model of the capital. Their paſſion for exerciſes of devotion and auſterity, was greatly encreaſed, by the ravages of a peſtilential diſtemper, which deſolated France in 1583. Crouds of penitents arrived at Paris, from the neighbouring diſtricts. On the 10th of September, between eight and nine hundred perſons, of both ſexes, many of whom had not attained to years of maturity, entered the metropolis. All of them were diſguiſed in ſacks, bearing in their hands, either lighted tapers, or wooden croſſes; and conducted by two gentlemen on horſeback, with their

Superſtition of the people.

Provincial proceſſions.

(45) L'Etoile, p. 90 and 91.

(46) Buſbeq. letter 8th, p. 116 and 117. Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 160.

wives

wives in a coach, habited in a similar manner (47). Five other companies of penitents followed, in the courſe of the ſame month; and ſuch was the inconceivable frenzy, which manifeſted itſelf throughout the kingdom, that ten or twelve thouſand are ſaid to have viſited the ſhrine of "our lady of Lieſſe," near Rheims, who were principally natives of the Ardennes (48).

Paſſion of Henry the Third, for theſe obſervances.

Notwithſtanding the general contempt which Henry incurred by practices ſo unbecoming his ſtation, he perſiſted in his adherence to them during his whole life. It was a mark of peculiar favor to be admitted, or allowed, to wear the uniform of the penitents; and the young nobility emulated the diſtinction, as an omen of their future elevation (49). The king, not ſatisfied with his public devotions, was accuſtomed to retire at ſtated intervals, to the convent which he had conſtructed in the wood of the caſtle of Vincennes; where, immured with his companions of the order of the Hieronimites, he ſeemed to lay down the functions of a prince, and to aſſume thoſe of a recluſe. He carried the monaſtic rage to ſuch a length, as to deliver, himſelf, in perſon, the ſermon, or exhortation, on particular occaſions (50). When we reflect on theſe extraordinary marks of puerile or degrading ſuperſtition, we are almoſt led to queſtion the ſanity of his intellects; and it cannot excite amazement, that the League ſhould have formed the project of immuring him for life, in a monaſtery. The vices of which he was too juſtly ſuſpected, and which his retirements were calculated to favor or conceal, rendered him not only odious, but contemptible. It is well known, that the ducheſs of Montpenſier was, when in the

Contempt, incurred by them.

(47) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. [illegible] l'Etoile, p. 71. Buſbeq. letter 25th, p. 158 and 159.

(48) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. ibid.

(49) Sully, vol. i. p. 40. (50) L'Etoile, p. 82.

royal

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royal preſence, a pair of golden ſciſſars, at her girdle, with which ſhe did not ſcruple to declare, that ſhe hoped to perform the operation of the tonſure on the king, holding his head between her knees (51). He had aſſumed for his device, two crowns, in alluſion to thoſe of France and of Poland, with the motto,

"Manet ultima cœlo."

In deriſion, the League cauſed the following diſtich to be compoſed:

"Qui dedit ante duas, unam abſtulit; altera nutat;
"Tertia, tonſoris eſt facienda manu (52)."

Similar inſtitutions.

Beſides the order of penitents, Henry inſtituted, in May, 1585, a private confraternity, called "the "Society of the Brothers of Death;" of which he had ſeen the model among the Poles, during his ſhort reſidence in that country. Only twenty-one members, or brothers, were admitted into the company, named by the king: their dreſs was black; and the ſtatutes, compoſed by him likewiſe, betray a gloomy, eccentric, and diſordered imagination (53). Never was any period more deeply tinctured with ſuperſtition, or more deſtitute of real piety and morality.

Proceſſion of the penitents to Chartres.

But, the moſt groteſque and ſingular exhibition, preſented under this reign, was the proceſſion of penitents, deputed by the Pariſians, in May, 1588, to wait on Henry at Chartres, with a view of deprecating his reſentment, and perſuading him to return to the metropolis. The circumſtances are ſo incredible, that if we did not receive them from an eye-witneſs, and an hiſtorian of equal gravity and veracity, they could ſcarcely obtain belief. Nothing

(51) De Thou, vol. x. p. 445.
(52) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 199.
(53) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 47—51.

can

can more forcibly depicture the genius and character of the age, when such indecent and scandalous profanations were frequent, and excited neither horror nor disgust. Thirty-five brothers of the order of the penitents, followed by a vast croud of other persons, barefoot, were conducted by the count of Bouchage, brother to the duke of Joyeuse, killed at Coutras; and who had, in the course of the preceding year, embraced the monastic profession. He was induced, in order to awaken the sympathy or compassion of the king, to represent, on this occasion, the person of our Saviour ascending Mount Calvary. His head was encircled with a crown of thorns; and on his forehead were painted drops of blood. His hands were tied behind him; while on his shoulder he bore, or dragged, a long cross of painted pasteboard, under the oppressive weight of which he appeared to be sinking. At intervals, he threw himself upon the ground, uttering lamentable groans. Two young Capuchin Friars, on each side of him, appeared in the characters of the Virgin Mary, and of the Magdalen. Four others, wildly attired, held the cords, with which the principal actor was bound; and with their scourges, frequently inflicted on his back, a severe discipline. Accustomed as Henry was, and partial as he might be esteemed, to such spectacles, he felt the impiety and profanation attached to a mockery of one of the most sacred mysteries of religion: he even reproached Bouchage with his credulity and zeal, which rendered him an instrument in the hands of the League; many of whose adherents had the audacity to mix in the cavalcade, disguised under the penitential sack (54).

Description of that ceremony.

(54) De Thou, cited by d'Anquetil, in the Esprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 30—33. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 61 and 62. Memoires pour ser. à l'Hist. de Fr. p. 248.

Processions

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Religious proceſſions.

Proceſſions of every kind, intended either to conciliate the divine favor, or to deprecate its wrath, characterized the reign of the laſt of the princes of Valois. They were encouraged, and uſually conducted, by the cardinal of Bourbon; a weak and ſuperſtitious prelate, who acted a diſtinguiſhed, though only a ſubordinate part, in the troubles, cauſed by the ambition of the houſe of Guiſe. In July, 1587, he headed a proceſſion at Paris, compoſed of perſons of both ſexes, and of every age, in which the ſeven ſhrines of St. Germain were carried by men in their ſhirts, without other dreſs. Torches of wax were borne by all the aſſiſtants. Henry, at a moment when cares of ſtate ought to have occupied his whole attention, and when foreign armies conſpiring with domeſtic enemies, were preparing to deſolate his dominions; was not aſhamed to mix in ſo motley a cavalcade, habited as a penitent, and to commend the order of its march (55). Crouds of devotees, from Champagne, Picardy, and Lorrain, dreſſed in white, and ornamented with croſſes; quitting their occupations, and abandoning the cultivation of the country, continued to arrive in the capital. They were highly ſubſervient to the deſigns of the duke of Guiſe, who, under ſhelter of the concealment, contrived to introduce his partizans, and to prepare for the inſurrection which ſoon afterwards took place (56).

Political conſequences of them.

During the period of about ſeven months, which intervened between the aſſaſſination of that prince at Blois, and the death of the king himſelf; when the minds of men were inflamed beyond meaſure, from the events of the moment; the rage for proceſſions attained to its higheſt point. It ſeemed almoſt to partake of frenzy, among the Pariſians,

(55) L'Etoile, p. 101 and 102. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 654.
(56) De Thou, ibid.

and

and to have perverted the exercise of reason. The people rose in multitudes, during the night; and, notwithstanding the severity of the season, clamorously compelled the priests and curates to lead them in procession. Even the rigor of the weather did not induce them to wear any clothes; and they paraded through the streets, in their shirts only, insensible to every impediment (57). The most libertine, and scandalous excesses, were committed with impunity, under the protection of the darkness, in these promiscuous assemblies, composed of men, women, and children. Ladies of gallantry found them too convenient, not to profit of the occasions; and so notorious were the debaucheries acted, that the few priests, who had not sacrificed every consideration of morals or of religion, to the spirit of rebellion, endeavoured, though fruitlessly, to stop such dissolute proceedings. We can hardly believe, that many thousand children of both sexes, carrying, each a taper in their hands, after traversing the capital, extinguished them at the same time, trampling them under foot, and exclaiming, "God ex-"tinguishes the race of Valois!" Scarcely any example of national madness, to be found in the annals of mankind, can equal that of the French people, at the conclusion of the reign of Henry the Third. The duke of Nevers, who flourished at that time, and whose Memoirs bear testimony to the enlargement of his understanding, considers the Parisians, as under the influence of a contagious delirium, or, an infectious distemper, only to be compared to the hooping cough (58). De Thou, a contemporary, and a spectator of it, seems to conceive, that nations, like individuals, are subject to paroxysms of frenzy, which visit them periodically;

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Libertinism and debauchery.

Processions of children.

Sentiment of De Thou, on the madness of nations.

(57) Mem. pour ser. à l'Hist. de Fr. p. 270—272.
(58) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 935 and 936.

and

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and the events of the preſent time, unparalleled in atrocity, preciſely at the diſtance of two hundred years, might induce us to adopt the opinion of that ſagacious and enlightened hiſtorian (59).

Declamations from the pulpit.

The year 1583, which ſaw the origin of the order of penitents, was likewiſe the era, from whence may be dated another characteriſtic feature of this period of general diſorder and anarchy. By ſingular fatality, a prince, who had always loaded the eccleſiaſtics, and particularly, the monaſtic orders, with marks of affection bordering on weakneſs, found in them in his moſt dangerous, and implacable enemies. Poncet, a monk, poſſeſſed of a ſpecies of eloquence, adapted to the audience whom he was accuſtomed to addreſs; and reſtrained by no ſentiments of reſpect for the perſon of his ſovereign, led the way, by the groſs inſinuations which he uttered, to the bolder invectives that followed, after Henry's flight from the metropolis. He did not ſcruple to accuſe the members of the new confraternity, with hypocriſy and atheiſm. We may form an idea of the ſtyle of the pulpit declamation in that age, from Poncet's diſcoveries. "I have been informed," ſaid he, "that after their proceſſion, the ſpit turned "for the ſupper of theſe jolly penitents; and that "from devouring a fat capon, they proceeded to "complete their repaſt, by a delicate chicken kept "in readineſs for the night. Ah! miſerable hypo- "crites! It is thus that you jeſt with God under a "maſk, and carry at your girdle a ſcourge. It is "not there, that it ought to be placed; but, upon "your backs and ſhoulders: there is not one of "you, who has not amply deſerved it!" The only puniſhment inflicted on him, for a ſatire ſo inſolent,

Lenity of Henry the Third, pernicious.

(59) De Thou, vol. x. p. 529. Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 61 and 62. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 119. Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 270—272.

and

and in which alluſion was made to the king without any diſguiſe, conſiſted in his temporary removal from Paris, by Henry's order, to the abbey of St. Peter, at Melun (60). Encouraged by ſo injudicious a lenity, the evil ſpread with prodigious rapidity. After the aſſaſſination of the Guiſes, no meaſures were obſerved by the preachers, who only ſeemed to vie with each other in the violent and treaſonable appellations, beſtowed by them on their ſovereign. Many of them are too repugnant to our ideas of decorum, even to be tranſcribed. Regicide was publickly enjoined and recommended. Scriptural citations, of the moſt impious nature, were applied to the ducheſs of Nemours, mother to the duke and cardinal, recently put to death at Blois. She was compared to the Virgin Mary, as Henry was to Herod (61). Collects, and forms of prayer, or, rather of imprecation, were compoſed by the Sorbonne, invoking the vengeance of Heaven againſt their late king. Several of theſe are preſerved, and forcibly demonſtrate the virulence of the times (62).

Impiety, and indecency of the preachers.

Imprecations.

Reprehenſible in the extreme, as were the exceſſes committed by the clergy of the League, they were, if poſſible, exceeded by the deteſtable doctrines, which the Catholic prieſts promulgated from the pulpit, in many of the provinces. There is an original letter ſtill in being, written by Henry, king of Navarre, to his miſtreſs, Coriſande d'Andouins, dated the 17th of March, 1588, from the province of Saintonge, in which he expreſsly ſays: "The "Romiſh preachers, in all the cities of this country, "commend the act of poiſoning the prince of

Deteſtable doctrines promulgated.

(60) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 159 and 160. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 69.

(61) L'Etoile, p. 113 and 115, and 123. Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 272.

(62) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 269 and 270. Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 82. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 118. De Thou, vol. x. p. 527.

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"Condé; declare, that there is only one more, to "be desired; canonise the murder, and the mur- "derer; nay, admonish every good Catholic, to "take example by so Christian an enterprize (63)." It is not possible more strongly to depicture the savage and sanguinary spirit, which pervaded every class of men in that age, when religious enmity had almost extinguished the sentiments of humanity. Tavannes accuses the Hugonots of having advanced similar tenets and principles, if not from the pulpit, yet, in their two famous publications, entitled the "Reveille Matin," and the "Tocsin des François," written at an early period of the civil wars (64).

Asylums.

Among the abuses produced by superstition, and tending, in an eminent degree, to spread through the lower orders of people, the contagion of vice, was the existence and sanctity of asylums. These institutions, originating in ignorance and barbarism, were perverted to purposes the most subversive of all justice, or good order. One of the most celebrated, in the period before us, was that of St. Romain, at Rouen. By the letters patent of Louis the Twelfth, confirming its privileges, persons guilty of treason, false coiners, and some others, were excepted from the right of protection. But, during the time when the see of Rouen was occupied by the cardinal of Bourbon, the asylum of St. Romain became a refuge for criminals of every description. Its vicinity to the metropolis, and the rigid support given by the archbishop, to the right of sanctuary, induced numbers to fly to it, in order to elude the purport of the laws. From a sense of gratitude to the protector, they readily entered into the great conspiracy,

St. Romain's, at Rouen.

Abuse arising from it.

(63) Letters origin. d'Henry IV. Œuvres de Voltaire, vol. x. p. 234 and 235.

(64) Tavannes, p. 217.

formed

formed by the League, againſt the royal authority and the ſtate, of which the cardinal became a voluntary inſtrument. The parliament of Rouen, deeply ſenſible of the impediments thrown in the way of juſtice, by the continuance of ſuch a privilege, made repeated, but, ineffectual applications to the king, for interpoſition. The careleſs apathy of that prince, rendered him inſenſible to their ſalutary remonſtrances. An aſſembly of princes and counſellors of ſtate having been convoked by Henry, in 1583, where the reformation of the courts of law formed a principal object of conſideration; La Gueſle, preſident of the parliament of Paris, harangued with eloquence and force, upon the pernicious nature and tendency of the aſylum of St. Romain. The cardinal of Bourbon, indignant at the attack upon the immunities of his ſee, inſtantly threw himſelf at the king's feet, and implored, that La Gueſle might be compelled to make ſatisfaction to himſelf, and to the church of Rouen, for ſo ſcandalous an outrage. The emotion of the prelate only excited ridicule; but, the abuſe, of which complaint was made, continued to exiſt in all its force (65).

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Ineffectual attempt to procure its ſuppreſſion.

In no inſtance, does the credulity and folly of the vulgar ſeem to have been more abuſed, than in the article of relics. We find the ſame groſs deceptions, which had been practiſed, and expoſed among the Engliſh, at the time of the reformation under Henry the Eighth, ſtill ſubſiſting in France, at the commencement of the civil wars. It would be endleſs to cite examples of this fact. At the capture of Tours, by the prince of Condé, in 1562, the ſhrine of St. Martin, one of the richeſt and moſt celebrated in the kingdom, was plundered. Among other ſacred ornaments, was a gem, regarded as a

(65) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 83—86.

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portrait of the Virgin Mary, and held in high veneration. Beza, on inſpection, aſcertained it to be an antique agat of Venus, weeping over the body of Adonis. A ſilver arm of a ſaint, found in the ſame place, on being opened, was diſcovered to contain a knave of ſpades, and a love ſong. At Bourges, the Hugonots broke to pieces a relic, within which was a ſmall wheel turning on a piece of wood; and round it was a billet, containing theſe lines:

"Quand cette Roue tournera,
"Cette que j'ayme, m'aymera (66)."

State of the Hugonots, at this period.

In order to form a perfect idea of the political ſtrength of France, during the period under our conſideration, it is indiſpenſable to take a ſurvey of the ſtate of the Hugonots. Notwithſtanding the perſecutions which they had ſuffered, the wars ſuſtained by them, and the maſſacres repeatedly perpetrated by order of the court, or by the enmity of the Catholics; they ſtill continued to be equally

Numbers.

numerous and formidable. In the northern and eaſtern provinces, they were comparatively few; but, in Dauphiné, and along the ſhore of the Mediterranean, they conſtituted a large proportion of the inhabitants. Their principal force was concentered between the Loire and the Garonne; compriſing a rich, maritime, and commercial tract of country, in which Rochelle, the capital, was ſituated.

Genius of their government, republican.

The genius of their government, civil and eccleſiaſtical, partook more of a democratic, than of any other form; tempered notwithſtanding by a mixture of ariſtocracy, and greatly under the influence of their clergy, and municipal magiſtrates. Before the commencement of the firſt civil wars, in 1562, the cities of the Proteſtant communion, in imitation

(66) Theod. Beza. Hiſtoire Eccleſiaſt. liv. vii. p. 583 and 584. Confeſſ. de Sancy, p. 463—465.

of

of Geneva, had formed the plan of excluding the nobility from any participation in the political power and authority. But, when, in conſequence of the ſuperior forces of the Crown and the Catholics, they found themſelves ready to be cruſhed, it became indiſpenſable to call to their aſſiſtance the princes of Bourbon. After the battle of Jarnac, in 1569, Coligni obtained over the whole Hugonot party, an empire the moſt unlimited, which he exerciſed till his death. His great endowments, age, and ſincere attachment to the cauſe, joined to the perilous ſituation of their affairs, overcame all competition. The maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, in which Coligni, and ſo great a number of the Proteſtant nobility periſhed, emancipated the party from this ſervitude; and after ſucceſsfully combating the Crown, they determined not to ſubject themſelves voluntarily to any ſpecies of government, except a Republic (67).

Power of Coligni.

It was in vain that Francis, duke of Alençon, attempted, by affecting a regard for their intereſts, to acquire any permanent ſupremacy in their counſels. Even, while that prince headed the Hugonot armies againſt his brother, Henry the Third, his conduct was watched with jealous and ſuſpicious attention. The city of Rochelle, in 1576, far from admitting him to exerciſe the ſlighteſt portion of authority, refuſed him the reſtitution of a few pieces of cannon, and rejected his requeſt of aiding him by a pecuniary loan (68). During the whole period between 1576 and 1589, the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé, either openly, or in ſecret, exerted their endeavours to be reſpectively recognized protector of the Proteſtants. The former, as more nearly allied to the crown, ſeemed to have a ſuperior claim: but, many circumſtances inclined them to

Duke of Alençon.

Rivality of Navarre and Condé.

(67) Tavannes, p. 394. (68) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 431.

prefer

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prefer the prince. The gravity of his diſpoſition, and his averſion to every kind of libertiniſm, was more analogous to the ſpirit of the Hugonot religion, than the character of his couſin: his father's death at Jarnac pleaded in his behalf; and he poſſeſſed all the qualities requiſite for ſo arduous a ſtation. The king of Navarre, notwithſtanding, obtained the preference; but, it was little more than a nominal ſupremacy (69). A penſion was aſſigned to Condé, by no means ample; as the ſtates of Flanders, nearly at the ſame period, had done by the archduke Matthias. It was not till after a long negociation, and many delays, that the magiſtrates of Rochelle admitted him to make his entry into that city, in November, 1756. He was only accompanied by a few followers, and he quitted the place ſoon afterwards, to retire to St. John d'Angely, his uſual reſidence (70).

Independance of Rochelle.

The king of Navarre could not attain to any greater conſideration, notwithſtanding the numerous ſacrifices which he made to his religious faith, and the zealous intereſt that he took in the welfare of the Hugonot-body. After his eſcape from Paris, in 1576, and his public reſumption of the Proteſtant doctrines and worſhip, he could yet ſcarcely obtain permiſſion to enter Rochelle, attended by fifty horſemen. The inhabitants, under arms, in great numbers, and reinforced by thoſe of the neighbouring iſlands, Ré and Oleron, received him with apparent demonſtrations of affection; while they took every precaution to ſecure themſelves againſt any enterprize (71). A degree of competition and rivality conſtantly ſubſiſted between the two princes of Bourbon, during the reign of Henry the Third, which might have

(69) Tavannes, ibid. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 88. Davila, p. 456.
(70) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 438—441.
(71) Ibid. p. 429 and 430.

produced

produced consequences fatal to the interests of both, if they had not been terminated by the premature and lamentable death of the prince of Condé. A short time only before that tragical event, after the victory at Coutras, in November, 1587, the duke de la Tremouille urged the prince to render himself independant sovereign in the provinces of Anjou, Poitou, and Saintonge: a scheme which he seemed not averse to have attempted without delay (72).

Struggle of Condé to supplant the king of Navarre.

The King of Navarre had foreign, as well as domestic competitors, for the title of Protector of the Hugonots. In a synod, held at Montauban, it was proposed to confer that dignity on John Casimir, son to Frederick the Third, elector palatine, who had repeatedly sent, or conducted troops to the assistance of the professors of the reformed religion. An annual donation of one hundred and twenty-five thousand crowns, was destined to accompany the office, in order to retain constantly the superior officers under the standard, besides a fund for paying the soldiery. The misconduct of John Casimir's ministers, deputed to negociate with the French Protestants, rather than any effectual opposition which it was in the king of Navarre's power to exert, seems to have rendered the plan abortive: but, it strongly displays the distrust entertained of that prince (73). If once any foreign chief had become the efficient head and protector of the Hugonots, the civil wars might have been prolonged and perpetuated without end. Even some months after the decease of the prince of Condé, in November, 1588, when the king of Navarre, as president, convoked, and opened the general assembly at Rochelle, he was menaced with a blow subversive of all his measures for retaining the protectorship of the Protestants. Many persons of quality, and even

Foreign competitors of that prince.

John Casimir.

(72) Sully, vol. i. p. 60 and 61. (73) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 88.

some

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Attempt, to name protectors of the Hugonots.

some of the clergy, were desirous to name protectors of their religion in every province of France, which amounted to eighteen. In order to elude the blow, he consented to erect six courts or tribunals, in as many of the principal cities, to take cognizance of, and to pass sentence in all causes; peculiarly in those which respected his own officers, who had rendered themselves obnoxious and unpopular, by exacting contributions, on various pretences. A proposition so unobjectionable, met with universal approbation, and averted the impending misfortune (74). Such was the situation of the Hugonot Commonwealth; for so it may be justly denominated, at the close of Henry the Third's reign. The cities scarcely acknowledged any civil authority, except that of the mayors, or magistrates; paid few contributions; and resembled the free, imperial cities of Germany. It was not till after the termination of the civil wars, and the auspicious period of peace which ensued under Henry the Fourth, that an alteration took place in these important particulars (75).

Independance of that body.

Ecclesiastical polity.

In their ecclesiastical polity and tenets of faith, the reformed church of France followed the doctrines of Calvin. Lutheranism had made little progress among them; and the genius of Calvinism, repugnant to all gradations in spiritual preferment, tended to maintain the principles of civil equality. Provincial synods, and general assemblies, composed of delegates from the various orders, were frequently convened, to regulate their internal concerns, and to determine on the most important transactions of peace and war. In these meetings, the king of Navarre always presided, either in person, or by his representative (76). As early as the year 1555, un-

Synods.

(74) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 87.
(75) Tavannes, p. 394 and 395, and 227.
(76) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 87; and vol. x. p. 420 and 421.

der

der Henry the Second's reign, the Proteſtants began to eſtabliſh places of religious worſhip, and to form ſocieties for maintaining the purity of their faith. The firſt was made in Paris itſelf; and the example ſpread with amazing rapidity, in defiance of edicts and prohibitions (77). It would appear, that, at no period whatever of the reigns of Charles the Ninth and Henry the Third, was the exerciſe of their religion in private houſes and families, altogether ſuſpended, in the metropolis; although the penalty was capital for the offence (78). CHAP. III.

The numbers of the Hugonots, muſt be matter of conjecture, rather than of calculation. They never, probably, exceeded two millions, at their higheſt point. If we were to fix on the period when they were in the meridian of their power, and political ſtrength, we ſhould incline to date it, between the colloquy of Poiſſy in 1561, and the maſſacre of Paris, eleven years afterwards. During that interval, marked by all the calamities of civil war and religious diſcord, perſecution ſuſtained, and inflamed their enthuſiaſm. The name and aid of ſucceſſive princes of the blood, the fortitude of Jane, queen of Navarre, the genius of Coligny, and the aſſiſtance of foreign powers, enabled them to diſpute for pre-eminence with the antient ſuperſtition, and almoſt to ſubvert the throne itſelf. If the enterprize of Meaux had not been fruſtrated, by the promptitude and intrepidity of the Switzers, who protected the flight of Charles the Ninth to Paris, it is hard to ſay what barrier could have been affixed to the demands or inroads of the Proteſtants. How generally diffuſed were the tenets of the reformers, and how univerſally they were embraced or imbibed, even in the court, we may ſee in the Memoirs of Numbers of the Hugonots.

(77) Art. de Verif. vol. i. p. 644.
(78) Sully, vol. i. p. 57.

Margaret

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Margaret of Valois. The duke of Anjou himſelf, afterwards Henry the Third, and who ſignalized his early youth by the victories which he obtained over them, had, nevertheleſs, previouſly caught the contagion. "All the court," ſays Margaret, "was "infected with hereſy; and peculiarly, my brother "of Anjou, ſince king of France, whoſe childhood "had not eſcaped the impreſſion of Hugonotiſm. "He inceſſantly teized me to change my religion, "throwing my prayer-books into the fire, and giving "me in their ſtead, pſalms and Hugonot prayers, "which he compelled me to uſe. To theſe acts of "violence, he added menances, that my mother "would order me to be whipped (79)." We may judge from the force and ſimplicity of the queen of Navarre's deſcription, how widely the reformed doctrines were ſpread, and how favorably they were received, among the higheſt orders of ſociety. The Proteſtants continued ſtill to be formidable, under Henry the Third, though their numbers were leſſened; but, after the acceſſion of the king of Navarre to the throne of France, they began rapidly to diminiſh. The deſertion of that monarch, and his reconciliation to the church of Rome; together with the toleration granted them by him, tended inſenſibly to draw off all thoſe, who were not animated with fervent zeal for the maintenance of the reformed religion.

Revenues.

It was impoſſible to aſcertain the revenue of a body of men, whoſe contributions were, in a great meaſure, voluntary, and augmented or diminiſhed according to the exigencies of the time. Their military reſources were ſufficiently demonſtrated by the armies which they raiſed, and by the celerity exhibited in their levies. We cannot reflect without amazement, that, in 1568, the two provinces of

Forces.

(62) Memoires de Marguerite, Paris, 1658. p. 9, 10.

Dauphiné

Dauphiné and Languedoc only, conducted above twenty-five thousand men to the assistance of the prince of Condé, collected with surprizing facility. They were equipped, armed, and provided, in the amplest manner. D'Acier, their commander, had, in his own company, near two hundred gentlemen (80). Notwithstanding the defeats of Jarnac and of Montcontour, in the following year; the last of which actions cost the Hugonots not less than nine thousand troops; Coligni re-appeared in 1570, at the head of a new army, in Burgundy. No efforts of equal magnitude were made after the death of that celebrated chief; because the Protestants, disunited, no longer acted with the same promptitude and energy. The king of Navarre did not succeed to Coligni's power and influence; nor did Henry the Third betray the same sentiments towards his Hugonot subjects, which had animated him, when conducting the forces of Charles the Ninth. The edict of Poitiers, granting them toleration, was his own immediate act (81). It must be admitted, that the recommencement of war by the Protestants, in 1580, was a wanton and unjustifiable infraction of treaty, produced by the intrigues of the court of Nerac, where women and gallantry directed every measure. So sensible were the principal cities of the reformed religion to this fact, that Rochelle, and several others, refused to join in the insurrection (82). Before 1588, the violent enthusiasm of the Hugonots had greatly subsided: and they were no longer animated by the same spirit, which, under Charles the Ninth, had rendered them invincible, and superior to defeats, or massacres. The lapse of time had insensibly softened the asperity of

Renewal of hostilities in 1580, unjustifiable.

(80) Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 588 and 589.
(81) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 531.
(82) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 225.

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the two great factions, and calmed their rancour. The duke of Nevers, writing to Henry the Third, in Auguſt, 1588, ſays: "The Hugonots have "ſpent all their fire, and are only on the defenſive. "Neither cities, nor provinces, follow them any "longer. The ardor of novelty is extinct, and "there is, in fact, nothing to be feared from them. "But, the League is in its firſt vigor, and all the "world is attracted to that party (83)." Towards the cloſe of his reign, Henry can only be conſidered as acting under the impulſe of the Guiſes, who compelled him, reluctantly, to take up arms againſt the princes of Bourbon, as the head of the Proteſtants.

Maritime force.

The maritime force of the Hugonots was principally maintained and ſtationed at Rochelle, or in the ports and iſlands of its vicinity. It bore no ſmall proportion to the royal navy of France, and ventured, on various occaſions, to contend with it, for victory. In 1573, the count of Montgomery commanded fifty-three veſſels, when he appeared off the harbour of Rochelle, then cloſely beſieged by the duke of Anjou. Several of theſe were, unqueſtionably, Engliſh; twelve were ſhips laden with ſtores; and, except two, the whole fleet conſiſted of veſſels, not exceeding ſixty tons burthen. We may judge of their ſize, by the number of men on board: there were eighteen hundred; of whom ſcarcely a thouſand were ſailors. They were very ill equipped, and ſtill worſe provided with cannon. Montgomery was unable to effect the object of the expedition, or to attack the royal gallies, anchored in the port (84). But, four years afterwards, in 1577, the Proteſtants poſſeſſed a more conſiderable naval ſtrength. The prince of Condé put himſelf on board their fleet,

(83) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 855.
(84) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 48.

compoſed

compoſed of ſeventeen upper-decked ſhips, and as many of inferior ſize. One of them was a Spaniſh veſſel, of four hundred tons (85). Henry's admiral, Lanſac, who had under his command no leſs than ſixty ſail, of different dimenſions and deſcriptions, had been purſued by Clermont d'Amboiſe, only a ſhort time before, at the head of the Hugonot ſquadron, and compelled to take refuge in the Garonne (86). The Proteſtants do not ſeem to have been maſters of any gallies.

Commerce. Rochelle.

Their commerce, as well as their marine, was almoſt excluſively confined to Rochelle. That city, advantageouſly ſituated, open to the Atlantic, and inhabited by a hardy, induſtrious race of men, accuſtomed to brave the dangers of the ocean, enjoyed, even in the midſt of civil war, an extenſive and lucrative trade. In 1568, they reckoned ten thouſand foreign merchants, who viſited and carried on a traffic to Rochelle (87). Their complete independance on the crown, which took place in the following year: their civil and religious freedom: their mild internal government; and the ſpirit of naval or commercial enterprize, which characteriſed the inhabitants; all theſe combined cauſes conduced to render the city proſperous and opulent, notwithſtanding the perpetual hoſtilities in which they were involved. The repulſe, ſuſtained by the duke of Anjou, under their walls, in 1573, at the head of a numerous army, inflamed, and exalted their courage. By means of Elizabeth, queen of England, they received continual ſupplies of military and naval ſtores, for which they made returns in corn and ſalt (88). Nor did they confine themſelves merely

Its ſtrength, and reſources.

Naval enterprizes.

(85) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 513, and 516.
(86) Ibid. p. 512.
(87) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 549.
(88) Ib. vol. iii. p. 515. Montluc, Comm. vol. iv. p. 344.

to

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to the fair advantages, derived from a commercial intercourſe with other ſtates. They fitted out ſhips, which cruized in every direction, and captured numbers of trading veſſels. In 1569, a large Venetian carrack, valued at fifty thouſand crowns, was attacked near the coaſt of Brittany, by the vice-admiral of the Hugonot fleet, and carried into Rochelle. She was confiſcated to the uſe of the cauſe, on very inſufficient and ſlight pretences (89). Some years afterwards, a Portugueze ſhip fell into their hands, after an obſtinate engagement, near the iſlands of the Azores; ſhe was reported to have had on board a thouſand pounds weight of gold, in bars (90). It was difficult to aſſign any cauſe for theſe acts of piracy and violence, except neceſſity, or convenience.

Captures.

Piracies and plunder.

We may judge how very productive were the naval expeditions, equipped for plunder, by the ſum derived from them to the Proteſtant chiefs, or princes, in the courſe of only two years, between the commencement of the third civil war, in 1568, and its termination, in 1570. The ſhare, appropriated to the admiralty, was one-tenth of all prizes; and it amounted, during that ſhort ſpace of time, to above three hundred thouſand livres, or more than twelve thouſand pounds (91). After the renewal of war in 1574, the admiralty portion was doubled, and one-fifth part of all captures was aſſigned to it, for the ſupport of the common cauſe; yet, ſo conſiderable a diminution of profit did not deter or diminiſh the number of adventurers. Rapacity, and the hope of rapidly acquiring wealth, rather than any neceſſity, was the ſpur to theſe enterprizes. Crimes the moſt revolting and enormous, were frequently committed

Crimes perpetrated by the adventurers.

(89) Memoires de Caſt. vol. i. p. 261.
(90) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 267.
(91) La Noue, p. 695.

by

by the Hugonot cruizers, who not only attacked, indifferently, almoſt all European nations, on the high ſeas; but, threw to the waves even the crews of their allies, in order thereby to conceal their depredations. This fact is not to be controverted, as we derive it from their own writers (92). CHAP. III.

Intolerance, and cruelty of the age.

In an age like the preſent, diſtinguiſhed rather by indifference, than by zeal, in matters of religion, we cannot eaſily conceive the degree of enmity and intolerance, which characterized the period under our conſideration. It roſe to ſuch a height, that, when ſharpened by civil war, it overbore and extinguiſhed every ſentiment of private affection, or general humanity. Repreſſed in ſome meaſure, by the vigorous adminiſtration of Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second, it burſt all limits under the three ſucceeding princes, and converted the kingdom into a vaſt burying-ground. Montluc does not ſcruple to acquaint us, that, after having agreed to admit the garriſon of a beſieged town in Gaſcony, to capitulate, he privately ſent an emiſſary to enjoin his troops to break into the place while the terms were adjudging, and to put every inhabitant to the ſword. The order was executed in its utmoſt rigor (93). "I can aſſert with truth," ſays he, "that there is "not a commander of the king in all France, who "has diſpatched more Hugonots by the knife, or "by the halter, than myſelf (94)." When wounded at the ſtorm of Rabaſteins, in Bigorre, and conceiving himſelf near his end, his only concern appears to have been, not to allow a ſingle perſon to eſcape the general carnage; and he iſſued peremptory directions for the purpoſe. Even the women were not ſpared; and the Catholic ſoldiery precipitated

Montluc.

Carnage of Rabaſteins.

(92) La Noue, p. 696.
(93) Montluc, Comm. vol. iv. p. 92—94.
(94) Ibid. p. 121.

fifty

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fifty or sixty of the inhabitants from a tower, as matter of amusement (95). One of the most atrocious conspiracies ever conceived by bigotry, and undertaken by ambition under the cloak of religion, was that of Philip the Second, king of Spain, in concert with the Guises, against Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre. It was planned in 1565, and only failed in its execution, by the imprudence of one of the inferior agents. The intention was no other, than to seize a sovereign princess, of irreproachable manners, and allied to the royal blood of France, in the midst of her court, and in a time of profound peace, in order to deliver her over to the inquisition. The pretext for an enterprize so flagitious, was the queen's attachment to heresy. It was of sufficient magnitude to justify any crime, however perfidious or cruel, in the opinion of zealous Catholics. Every detail of this abominable and extraordinary transaction, is to be found in Villeroy (96).

Conspiracy, formed against Jane, queen of Navarre.

Its atrocious nature.

Even minds, naturally susceptible of the most beneficent sentiments towards mankind, became obdurate towards their own countrymen, when of a different persuasion in religion. Louis, duke of Montpensier, a prince otherwise of a mild and generous character, who commanded the royal armies under Charles the Ninth and Henry the Third, was accustomed to put to death, by a summary process, every prisoner accused of adherence to the Protestant doctrines, or to deliver them over to the brutal violence of his soldiers. When men were brought before him; "Friend," said he, "you are a Hugo-"not; I recommend you to Monsieur Babelot." This instrument of his cruelty was no other than a monk of the Franciscan order, who acted the part

Savage treatment of the Hugonots.

Montpensier.

(95) Montluc, Comm. vol. iv. p. 221 and 222.
(96) Villeroy, Memoires, vol. ii. p. 39—58.

of

of judge and executioner. They were no ſooner interrogated, than condemned and maſſacred. The women were commonly reſerved for the ſavage embraces of his guidon, or ſtandard-bearer. Far from exciting horror, or indignation, theſe barbarities ſerved only for ſubject of converſation, and of indecent raillery, among the ladies of the court, and at the tables of the great (97). CHAP. III.

John de Champagne, a nobleman of the ſame period, when reſiding at his caſtle of Peſcheſeul, on the river Sartre, uſed to throw all the Proteſtants who fell into his poſſeſſion, into the ſtream. He accompanied it with an inſulting piece of buffoonery, as performing an act of feſtivity, rather than a deliberate murder; nor did the laws take any cognizance of ſuch atrocious crimes (98). The chevalier Aumale, one of the princes of Lorrain, diſtinguiſhed for the ferocity and brutality of his manners, violated even the ſanctity of places of public worſhip; and committed every ſpecies of wanton debauch, or deliberate cruelty, in the Catholic churches. Nuns, and women of condition, were diſpoiled of their honor, before the high altar, to the foot of which they were dragged by the hair, in preſence of their huſbands, fathers, and neareſt relatives (99). But, it is in the writings of d'Aubigné, that we find the moſt accurate information upon a point, which ſo forcibly delineates the temper and ſpirit of the age. He is entitled to the greater credit, becauſe, being a zealuos Hugonot, he is, nevertheleſs, far from concealing the outrages committed by his own aſſociates, though he attempts to juſtify or palliate them, on the principle of retribution. St. Pont, a Catholic, com- St. Pont. Other inſtances.

(97) Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 280—282. D'Aub. vol. i. Hiſt. Univ. p. 135.
(98) Le Lab. ſur. Caſt. vol. ii. p. 482.
(99) Satyre Menip. vol. iii. p. 333, 334.

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manding at Macon in Burgundy, in 1562, uſually ordered a certain number of Proteſtants to be thrown from the bridge into the Soane, after the banquets with which he regaled the ladies, by way of paſtime (100). We cannot peruſe without diſguſt, as well as horror, the enormities committed at Tours, and at Orange, by the royal troops (101). Even Coligni himſelf, however naturally beneficent and mild, was propelled, by the ſanguinary genius of the times, to permit, or to authorize acts of wanton ſeverity. Retaliation, or vengeance, ſeemed to palliate theſe executions, which became unhappily neceſſary, in order to impoſe ſome reſtraint on minds, inflamed by religious animoſity, to a pitch of mutual phrenzy.

In October, 1562, twelve monks of the order of St. Francis, at Chateau Vilain, having been accuſed of maſſacring the ſick, or wounded Proteſtants of the army; Coligni cauſed them to be immediately hanged. Two of their own brotherhood voluntarily offered to become the executioners of the others. Ropes were delivered to both; and as an experiment of their reſpective capacity to perform the office of a hangman, one was ordered to diſpatch the other. It afforded a cruel paſtime to the ſpectators, to witneſs the efforts of theſe unfortunate men, to obtain the preference. "Never," ſays d'Aubigné, "did "the Retiarii, Laquearii, or Mirmillones of anti- "quity, diſplay before the Romans in the amphi- "theatre, more addreſs in vanquiſhing each other, "than did theſe Cordeliers. One of them having, "at length, dextrouſly contrived to ſtrangle his "companion, put to death all the ſurvivors." He was afterwards retained by the Hugonots, as executioner to the army, and grew very expert in his profeſſion (102). The pre-eminence in cruelty of every

(100) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 145.
(101) Ibid. p. 130 and 146.
(102) Confeſſion de Sancy, p. 492, 493, and p. 541.

ſpecies,

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ſpecies, was, notwithſtanding, ceded, by the univerſal teſtimony of his contemporaries, to des Adrets, who long rendered his name proverbial for barbarity, in the provinces on the Rhone, where he was at the head of the Hugonot forces (103). His ordinary mode of diſpatching the victims of his fury or enmity, was by precipitating them from a tower, and daſhing them in pieces: a ſpectacle, in which he took a ſavage delight. He was, however, not inacceſſible to pity, or to wit. Having ordered, after his dinner, thirty priſoners, taken at Montbriſon, and whom he had purpoſely reſerved, to precipitate themſelves from the edge of the mountain; one of them, terrified, and unable to take the leap, ſtopt ſhort on the extreme verge. "How," exclaimed des Adrets, "you take twice to do it?" "Sir," replied the ſoldier, "I will give you ten times, in "which to perform it." Charmed with an anſwer which evinced ſo much pleaſantry and ſelf-poſſeſſion, in a moment of ſuch peril, he immediately pardoned the man, and exempted him from the fate of his companions (104).

Des Adrets.

Anecdote of him.

From the determination of outdoing his enemies in cruelty, and of thus compelling them to carry on war with more humanity, des Adrets cauſed the hand and foot of three hundred Catholic gentlemen to be cut off, and ſent them in that condition, on carts, to the royal camp. The expedient, terrible as it was, did not fail to produce the intended effect (105). Such was the ferocity and ſpirit of perſecution, that it pervaded every rank and order of ſociety. The princeſs of Condé, and her eldeſt ſon, were in the moſt imminent danger of being ſtoned to death by the peaſants of a little village in

Severities of that commander.

(103) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 246—248.
(104) D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 147.
(105) Ibid. p. 155.

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the neighbourhood of Orleans, for the ſole crime of hereſy (106). Obedience to the laws and the ſovereign, were ſuperſeded by the deteſtation and antipathy of the two religions. When Rapin, a Hugonot gentleman, arrived at Toulouſe, in 1568, charged with the diſpatches from the king and from the prince of Condé, announcing the concluſion of a treaty of peace between the Crown and the Proteſtants; the magiſtrates and people inſtantly cauſed him to be executed without form of juſtice (107). In the ſhort interval which elapſed between that treaty and the renewal of war, not exceeding ſix months, more than ten thouſand Hugonots were maſſacred in various parts of France (108). The biſhop of Nevers, deputed by the prince of Condé, in 1562, to the emperor, Ferdinand the Firſt, did not heſitate to aſſert, in his harangue, pronounced before the diet aſſembled at Frankfort, that in the ſpace of only four months preceding the aſſumption of arms, thirty thouſand perſons profeſſing the reformed religion were put to death by the populace, throughout the kingdom (109).

Oblivion of the laws.

Maſſacres.

Even the moſt profound ſubmiſſion to the laws and magiſtrates, could not ſecure protection, nor preſerve from violence. In 1572, eight hundred Proteſtants, who, in obedience to the injunction of the governor of Lyons, had voluntarily allowed themſelves to be diſarmed and confined, on receiving his aſſurance of ſafety, were maſſacred by the Catholics, within an hour afterwards. At Rouen, a ſtill more enormous violation of faith was committed. More than eighteen hundred Hugonots, who had quitted the city, having returned to their houſes, upon promiſe of ſecurity in the king's name,

(106) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 134.
(107) Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 191. La Noue, p. 699.
(108) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 262.
(109) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 35.

were

were indiſcriminately ſacrificed to the implacable animoſity of their enemies. Theſe facts were ſo notorious and ſo inconteſtable, that the deputies of Henry the Third, ſoon after his acceſſion, did not heſitate to ſtate them, in the moſt forcible language. Neither the king, nor Catherine of Medicis, attempted to controvert, or deny the aſſertions. They only tried to palliate their enormity, by accuſing the Hugonots of ſimilar acts of perfidy, or vengeance (110). In the review of this ſanguinary and ferocious period, we are perpetually reminded of the ſcenes of devaſtation and ſlaughter, which have been again acted on the ſame theatre, by a ſavage populace, ſince the revolution of 1789. It was criminal, only to lean towards toleration. The great chancellor l'Hopital, known to lament the ſanguinary maxims of Charles the Ninth, and to deplore the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, was inſtantly marked for deſtruction. The guards of Catherine of Medicis could ſcarcely protect him from being torn in pieces by an enraged and furious people, who thirſted for his life, though paſſed in the diſcharge of every public duty, and every domeſtic virtue (111). Some years before, during the progreſs made by the court through the ſouthern provinces of France, it had become neceſſary to give him a guard, in order to ſecure him from outrage, on account of his avowed diſinclination to violent meaſures in matters of religion (112).

Danger of l'Hopital.

When we conſider how generally diffuſed was this intolerant ſpirit, we may, perhaps, incline to attribute to its influence, more than to any other cauſe, the calamities which mark the period. Neither the machinations of Catherine of Medicis, the ferocity of Charles the Ninth, nor the ambition and

Spirit and mode of thinking, in that century.

(110) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 339—341.
(111) Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. i. Eclairciſſements, p. 72 and 73.
(112) Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 100—101.

revenge

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revenge of the Guiſes, could have produced the maſſacre of Paris, if all the materials had not been previouſly diſpoſed. It is more to the age, than to any individuals, however elevated or profligate, that we ought to look, for the explication of that memorable and unparalleled event (113). To ſhed the blood of Heretics, was eſteemed meritorious. Marſhal Tavannes, who fairly avows in his Memoirs, that he adviſed the maſſacre, and who juſtifies it on principles of neceſſity and policy, died in the following year, at an advanced period of life. He met the approaches of diſſolution, with compoſure; exhibited marks of unfeigned piety; ordered his ſons to reſtore to the crown, without touching the revenues, an abbey which he poſſeſſed; and made confeſſion of all his ſins without reſerve. But, he did not include in the liſt, his advice to put to the ſword two thouſand Proteſtants who had repaired to Paris, on the faith of the royal protection, becauſe he felt neither remorſe, nor condemnation, for the act (114). Such was the genius of the century, and the perverſion of the human mind on religious concerns. A degree of enthuſiaſm, which ſuſpended and extinguiſhed all the ordinary motives to human action, and which ſwallowed up even ambition, natural affection, and ſelf-intereſt, pervaded the minds of men, on religious matters. A thouſand proofs of it occur. The duke of Nevers ſays in his Memoirs, that he conſidered a war againſt Heretics and Hugonots, as a cruſade, to which every man was bound to ſubſcribe his private fortune. He gave the beſt proof of his ſincerity, by lending immenſe ſums to Henry the Third, in order to pay his forces, at various times, when employed to reduce, or to exterminate the Proteſtants. All his

Marſhal Tavannes.

(113) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. Eclairciſſements, p. 67—69.
(114) Tavannes, p. 418—420, and 470.

writings,

writings, and the tenor of his whole life, evince, that the duke of Nevers was a man of ſcrupulous honor, unſhaken loyalty in an age of univerſal faction, and of real piety. He was carried away by the perſecuting ſpirit of the time in which he lived (115). CHAP. III.

The cardinal of Bourbon, a prelate mild and humane in his own nature, but, ſuperſtitious and intolerant; declared in a council, held at Blois, in February, 1577, where Henry the Third was preſent, that not even a temporary toleration ought, on any pretence, to be granted to the Hugonots. "I "have," ſaid he, "more intereſt in the preſerva- "tion of that body of men, than any other indivi- "dual, ſince my two nephews are engaged in their "quarrel; but, I would myſelf become their exe- "cutioner, if they are Heretics (116)." Montluc, notwithſtanding the cruelties which he ordered or perpetrated againſt the Proteſtants, was not deſtitute of principles of devotion towards the Supreme Being, as is evident from all his writings. He regarded himſelf as no other than an executioner of the divine vengeance, and engaged in a holy vocation, when putting to the ſword perſons convicted of hereſy. "I have never," ſays he, "been in "any action, that I have not invoked the aid of "the Deity; and I have not paſſed a day in my "whole life, without having prayed to, and de- "manded his forgiveneſs (117)." The prayer which he ſubjoins, as that, which, from his earlieſt entrance on a military life, he had been accuſtomed to offer to God, is ſuch as Marcus Aurelius, or Socrates, might have dictated and approved. The concluſion is equally ſublime and reſigned: "I "aſk not for life; for I deſire only that which

Montluc.

His enthuſiaſm and conviction.

(115) Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 170, 171.
(116) Ibid. p. 172. (117) Montluc, vol. iv. p. 332.

"pleaſes

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" pleaſes thee. Thy will be done: I ſubmit all to " thy divine goodneſs (118)." It is in theſe contradictions and inconſiſtencies, that we ſee fully depictured the character of the age, in which ſuperſtition and intolerance were perpetually blended, and whoſe union was ſo productive of ſcenes of deſtruction.

Examples of liberality and tolerance.

It is, notwithſtanding, matter of pleaſing reflexion to all who deſire to contemplate nature in an amiable point of view, to know, that even in a time ſo ſanguinary, there were not wanting ſome mild and beneficent ſpirits, occupied in tempering the rage of religious diſcord. Every page of the works of

L'Hopital.

l'Hopital, breathes conciliation and forgiveneſs. He was not ſatisfied with lamenting and condemning the violent meaſures of the cabinet of Charles the Ninth: he oppoſed them with ſteady, though, ineffectual firmneſs. His epiſtle to the cardinal of Lorrain, in 1562; and that, addreſſed to du Ferrièr, the French embaſſador at Venice, in 1568; are two of the moſt enlightened and maſterly productions of any period. They inculcate univerſal charity and toleration (119). It would have been happy for mankind, if maxims ſo benign had not been obliterated and rejected, in the frenzy of perſecution.

Caſtelnau.

Caſtelnau, whoſe valuable Memoirs terminate with the peace, concluded between the Crown and the Proteſtants, in 1570, finiſhes by thus apoſtrophizing his ſon: " Thou mayſt judge by what is " here related, that the ſpiritual ſword, which is " the good example of the clergy, charity, ex- " hortation, and other good works, are more ne- " ceſſary to extinguiſh hereſies, and to bring back " into the right path thoſe who have wandered out

(118) Montluc, vol. iv. p. 332.
(119) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Epitres, p. 176—181, and p. 191—202.

" of

" of it, than that which ſheds the blood of our neighbours: more particularly, when the diſeaſe has attained to ſuch a height, that in proportion as we attempt to cure it by violent remedies, we only irritate the diſorder (120)" The ſpeech of Paul de Foix, archbiſhop of Toulouſe, made in the cabinet and council of Henry the Third, on his return from Poland, in 1574, ſtrenuouſly adviſing meaſures of lenity and toleration towards the Proteſtants, is full of the ſame enlarged and comprehenſive ſentiments. They were enforced by De Thou, firſt preſident of the Parliament of Paris, and by Harlay, his ſucceſſor. But, Henry, for his own misfortune, and that of his ſubjects, was incapable of perceiving their beneficial tendency (121). CHAP. III. Paul de Foix.

Even marſhal Damville, ſon to the conſtable Montmorenci, and who ſubſequently attained to the ſame dignity, though an unlettered ſoldier, more inured to the hardſhips of a military life, than competent to judge of ſcholaſtic and theological diſputes; yet, felt the neceſſity of toleration. Experience ſupplied in him, the want either of expanſion of mind, or benevolence of diſpoſition. When the deputies of the States waited on him at Montpelier, in 1577, to acquaint him with their determination of renewing the war againſt the Proteſtants; he replied, that " the paſt calamities ſufficiently demonſtrated, that to God alone it belonged, to diſpenſe faith, which cannot be the work of any earthly power: that he could not enough expreſs his aſtoniſhment, at the reſumption of projects ſo fatal; and that all mankind muſt be convinced of the neceſſity of permitting the exerciſe of the two religions, as the only means of preſerving, or perpetuating internal peace (122)." Damville.

(120) Caſtel. Memoires, vol. i. p. 266.
(121) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 137—149.
(122) Ibid. p. 478 and 479.

Henry,

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King of Navarre.

Henry, king of Navarre, was a ſhining example of toleration, previous to, as well as after his aſcending the throne of France. In 1576, after his flight from Paris, and the renunciation which he made of the Catholic religion; far from attempting to force the conſciences of thoſe who adhered to it, he exerted all his endeavours, and not without ſucceſs, to obtain for them, the freedom of worſhip, in the city of Rochelle itſelf, the aſylum of the Hugonot faith and doctrines. At his requeſt, a chapel was permitted to be appropriated to the celebration of maſs; and his conduct in a point of ſuch importance and delicacy, acquired him, in no ſmall degree, the general eſteem and affection (123). In all his ſubſequent actions, we trace the ſame enlargement of mind. The ſeverity on religious concerns, which, if we may believe the teſtimony of Margaret of Valois, his wife, he exerciſed towards her at Pau, the capital of Bearn, during her reſidence in that city, ſeems to have ariſen more from private reſentment, than from a ſpirit of perſecution (124). When he over-ran Poitou, in 1589, and made himſelf maſter of a number of places in the province, he contented himſelf with reſtoring to the Proteſtants their civil and religious liberty, as granted them by the royal edicts; without attempting to moleſt, or, in any ſhape, to perſecute the Catholics (125). Even though we ſhould attribute to policy, a ſyſtem ſo replete with benefit to the State, we diminiſh little of its merit. The proſperity and repoſe, which diſtinguiſhed the laſt twelve years of the reign of Henry the Fourth, and which rendered the period one of the happieſt in the annals of the French monarchy, were eminently due to the benign influence of the maxims of toleration, embraced by that illuſtrious prince.

(123) Davila, p. 457. (124) Memoires de Marg. p. 172—174.
(125) De Thou, vol. x. p. 585. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 164.

It

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Condition, and resources of the king of Navarre.

It is requisite for the completion of the picture before us, to trace, with some degree of accuracy, the condition and resources of the king of Navarre, previous to his elevation to the throne of France. He may be considered as the most interesting character of the period; and when we reflect, that, after having rescued the country from an abyss of calamities, he founded a new race of monarchs; no portion of his life can be matter of indifference, in the general delineation of the age and time. During more than three years immediately following the massacre of Paris, he remained a captive in the court of the two kings, his brothers-in-law; deprived of power, watched with jealous circumspection, compelled to profess a religion in which he did not believe, and not exempt from perpetual and imminent danger of his life. It is incontestable, that Charles the Ninth consulted Philip the Second, in 1574, upon the measure of putting to death his own brother, the duke of Alençon, and the king of Navarre (126). He could not better address himself than to a prince, justly suspected of having accelerated the end of his only son, Don Carlos, a few years preceding. If Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre, had produced a son, the resolution to dispatch her husband, was already taken (127). Although he escaped from so many dangers, he was reduced to the lowest point of depression and insignificance. Catherine of Medicis compelled him, from his prison in the Louvre, to issue an edict, prohibiting, in all the territories of his obedience, the exercise of any other worship, except the Catholic (128). His subjects, encouraged by the court of France, and no

His captivity.

Danger.

State of depression.

(126) Deposition de Coconas, in Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 375, and p. 366.

(127) Deposition du Roi de Nav. in Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 361.

(128) Hist. de Marg. de Val. p. 117.

longer

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longer controlled by the presence of a master, threw off all subjection or obedience (129). Insulted, or duped by the duke of Guise, who abused his confidence, and betrayed him to Henry the Third, he was considered as incapable of producing any disturbance, and he sunk into oblivion (130). Immersed in pursuits of gallantry, natural to his age, and which Catherine of Medicis artfully encouraged, in order to reconcile him to his captivity, he excited no apprehension (131). His emancipation from confinement, was the first moment of his political existence. During above thirteen years, which elapsed between his escape, and the interview of Plessiz les Tours, in 1589, he underwent the severest trials of his fortitude and virtue. Exiled to the distant province of Gascony: proscribed by the king, his brother-in-law; persecuted by the powerful faction of the League: declared by the States General, unworthy to succeed to the crown: excommunicated by the Romish pontiffs: attacked by the armies of Henry the Third; and dishonoured, as well as betrayed by his own wife, who was not only false to his bed, but engaged in enterprizes against his dignity and repose: he vanquished these numerous assailants, and sustained the throne, which he was destined to ascend, when on the point of being subverted by a powerful and triumphant faction.

Exile, and hardships.

His dominions.

The king of Navarre possessed little more of royalty, except the name and external honors. A small portion of the Lower Navarre, together with the principality of Bearn, at the foot of the Pyrenees, constituted the whole of his contracted dominions. Ferdinand the Catholic had usurped, and retained

(129) Deposition du Roi de Nav. in Le Lab. vol. ii. p. 363.

(130) Memoires pour ser. à l'Hist. de Fr. p. 26. D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. i. p. 186 and 187.

(131) Esprit de la Ligue, vol. ii. p. 162.

the

the far greater part of the antient kingdom of Navarre. The duchy of Albret in Gaſcony, and that of Vendome, formed no inconſiderable addition to his patrimonial inheritance. In right of his queen, Margaret of Valois, he, likewiſe, exerciſed the ſupreme authority in the two provinces of the Agenois and Quercy, ceded to that princeſs on her marriage, with every royal prerogative (132). The title of governor of Guienne, which he retained, was deſtitute of political power or influence; nor would Bourdeaux, the capital, ever admit him within its walls (133). Limited as were the territories of the king of Navarre, his ſovereignty was inconteſtable and acknowledged. Jane, his mother, did not heſitate, in 1569, to cauſe St. Colombe, Favas, Pordiac, and ſeveral other gentlemen, taken in arms againſt her, to be executed as traitors; they being natural-born ſubjects, and, of courſe, guilty of high treaſon (134). The aggregate amount of the king of Navarre's revenues, was very inadequate to the ſupport of his dignity. It appears, that in 1573, after the acceſſion made to them, by the marriage portion of Margaret, they did not exceed, when the neceſſary charges were deducted, the clear ſum of one hundred and forty thouſand livres, or about ſix thouſand pounds ſterling; while the annual expence of his houſehold and eſtabliſhment roſe to double the ſum (135). In the preceding year, when he arrived at Paris, previous to his nuptials, he was accompanied by eight hundred noblemen and gentlemen, all in mourning for Jane, queen of Navarre (136). His pecuniary difficulties were ſuch, as to render it impoſſible for him either to maintain

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Patrimony.

Sovereignty.

Revenues.

Pecuniary diſtreſs.

(132) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 375.
(133) Ibid. vol. vii. p. 436 and 437.
(134) Memoires de Caſt. vol. i. p. 250.
(135) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 777.
(136) Memoires de Margue, p. 29.

the

the decent ſplendor of his court, or to reward the ſervices of his followers and ſervants. He ſupplied the deficiency, in a great degree, by the affability, frankneſs, and amenity of his manners. When the duke of Epernon was ſent by Henry the Third, in 1584, to exhort him to a change of religion; the favorite far exceeded the king of Navarre, in the pomp of his retinue, and the grandeur of his attendants (137). "The whole court of Nerac "could not have furniſhed forty thouſand livres," ſays Sully, "in 1586, at my arrival (138)." In his way thither, he ſupped with the prince of Condé, who was ſerved in wooden platters (139). It appears, that the largeſt pecuniary appointments, given to any perſon in the court of Navarre, were thoſe enjoyed by Sully, in his double capacity of counſellor of ſtate, and chamberlain. They amounted together, only to the annual ſum of two thouſand livres, or about ninety pounds ſterling (140).

Military force.

A ſovereign ſo limited in his revenues, could maintain a very ſlender military force. He may be ſaid not to have had any regular troops under the ſtandard; and only to have compoſed a haſty aſſemblage of ill-diſciplined vaſſals, or retainers, when preſſed by the exigency of his affairs. His weakneſs was ſuch, that in 1577, during the war with Henry the Third, he found himſelf incapable of forming any army; and was repulſed before the inconſiderable town of Marmande, in Guienne, with loſs and diſgrace, though he was preſent in perſon, at the head of all the cavalry and infantry in his power to aſſemble. Such was his deficiency in every requiſite for a campaign, or a ſiege, that his whole artillery

(137) Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 88.
(138) About ſeventeen hundred pounds. Sully vol. i. p. 45.
(139) Ibid. vol. i. p. 44.
(140) Memoires de Sully, vol. i. p. 414.

conſiſted

consisted in one large, and two small pieces of cannon (141). In the ensuing rupture of 1580, he betrayed still more evident marks of his inability to maintain a contest of duration, against the crown of France. Destitute of money and of troops, he was reduced to fly before Biron, who commanded the royal forces. The king of Navarre, shut up in Nerac, with only about four hundred horsemen, of whom the far greater number were in the service of the count of La Rochefoucault; beheld the enemy advance to the gates, and take post with four thousand foot, and six hundred cavalry, in the vineyards adjoining the city. He might have been compelled to surrender at discretion, and carried prisoner to Paris. But, Biron did not think proper to pursue his advantages; nor is it probable, that, at any period of his reign, Henry the Third could have desired, or approved, the entire destruction of the first prince of the blood (142). The largest body of forces which the king of Navarre seems ever to have commanded, before his accession to the crown of France, was at Coutras, where they amounted to four thousand foot, and two thousand five hundred horse: but, he was only the general; and far from being able to retain them after his victory, they immediately disbanded, or followed their respective leaders (143). At the accommodation between him and his brother-in-law, concluded at Tours, in 1589, it was stipulated, that he should maintain, at his own expence, two thousand infantry, and twelve hundred cavalry, to act against the League (144). Epernon brought a much more considerable force, levied and armed by himself, to the assistance of his master (145).

Slender resources.

Inability to resist the royal army.

His numbers at Coutras.

(141) Sully, vol. i. p. 16 and 18. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 191.
(142) Memoires d'Aub. Remarques, p. 214 Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 226.
(143) De Thou, vol. x. p. 19. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 322.
(144) De Thou, vol. x. p. 590.
(145) Vie d'Epernon, vol. p. 292.

We

CHAP. III. We know, however, with certainty, from the teſtimony of Du Pleſſis Mornay, who negociated the treaty between the two ſovereigns, that the king of Navarre was then at the head of five thouſand infantry; beſides five hundred gentlemen, and as many more harquebuſſiers, well mounted, and in the fineſt condition. Mornay even engaged, if orders for the purpoſe were iſſued by Henry the Third, that this body of troops ſhould be doubled in leſs than two months. But, the Hugonot party, of which the king of Navarre was the chief, furniſhed the reſources for levying, and maintaining them in the field. He was unable, from his own revenues, or dominions, to ſupport ſo heavy a charge (146).

Court of Navarre.

Notwithſtanding the poverty and diſtreſſes of the king of Navarre, his court was crouded, gay, and voluptuous. It was ſometimes held at Pau, in the province of Bearn; but, more frequently, at Nerac, the capital of the duchy of Albret. At every period, but, particularly, when Margaret, queen of Navarre, was preſent, gallantry, diverſions, and feſtivities of every kind, rendered it magnificent. The picture which ſhe draws of it, in 1579, and 1580, is lively, and coloured with animation. "We paſſed," ſays ſhe, "the greater part of our time at Nerac, where "the court was ſo brilliant, that we did not envy "that of France."—"There was not any thing to "regret, except that the greater part of the nobility "and gentlemen were Hugonots: but, of the dif- "ference of religious ſentiment, no mention was "made; the king, my huſband, and his ſiſter, "going to their devotions, while I and my train "went to hear maſs, in a chapel in the park. "When the ſervice was ended, we aſſembled again "in a garden, embelliſhed with avenues of laurels "and cypreſs, that bordered the river. In the after-

(146) Vie de Du Pleſſis Mornay. A Laide. 1647, p. 429.

"noon

"noon and evening, a ball was performed." She owns, that, far from impoſing any reſtraint on the irregularities of the king of Navarre, ſhe, on the contrary, aided, facilitated, and concealed his amours (147).

Margaret of Valois.

Abandoned to the moſt ſhameful exceſſes, and relying for impunity, on her deſcent from the blood of France, Margaret narrowly eſcaped from expiating her infidelities, by an ignominious death. Deſpiſed by her brother, Henry the Third, and become odious to her huſband; after having been driven with ignominy and diſgrace from the court of Paris, ſhe only owed her life to the clemency and humanity of the king of Navarre (148). He himſelf, attached to the counteſs of Guiche, was diſpoſed to make every ſacrifice to his paſſion; and to have legitimated his connexion with her by marriage, if he had not been prevented by the firm and generous exhortations of d'Aubigné (149). The rough, but ſalutary remonſtrances of Sully, at a ſubſequent period of his life, were alike effectual, when ready to give his hand to Gabrielle d'Eſtrées.

Number of his adherents.

Even in the moſt depreſſed ſtate of his fortune, the courage, affability, and frankneſs of character which diſtinguiſhed the king of Navarre, acquired him numerous followers. In 1576, at an interview which took place between him and the queen-mother, in the town of Thouars in Poitou, he ſeduced into his ſervice, thirty-two gentlemen of the French court (150). At Pau and Nerac, he was conſtantly ſurrounded by Catholic, as well as Hugonot nobles; but, ſuch was the animoſity which ſubſiſted between them, that they were more than once on the point of cutting each other in pieces. The king was accuſ-

(147) Hiſt. de Marg. p. 323. Memoires de Marg. p. 176, 177.
(148) D'Aub. Memoires, p. 105. Lettres du Roi de Nav. in the Œuvres de Voltaire, vol. x. p. 236 and 237.
(149) Memoires d'Aub. p. 123—129. (150) Ibid. p. 52.

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tomed to say, that his obligations to the adherence of the Catholics, were much greater than to the Protestants; as the former served him upon principles more disinterested, and in contradiction to their religious prejudices (151).

Reasons for his refusal to abjure the reformed religion.

It may excite some degree of surprize, that, importuned as he was by Henry the Third, to resume the profession of the Romish faith, and tempted by the almost certain reversion of the greatest crown in Europe, he should yet have pertinaciously declined to adopt the measure. We must attribute his conduct partly to conviction, and partly to policy. The feeble character of the French king; the insidious enmity of Catherine of Medicis, and the dishonor, as well as danger, attached to such a step, deterred him, and delayed its consummation. But, he felt its necessity, if he ever attained to the throne of France; and though he refused, after a long struggle and much irresolution, to comply with Epernon's solicitations in 1584; yet, on that, and on every occasion, he professed his readiness to receive instruction, and prepared the minds of the nation for his final conversion. It may be fairly asserted, that whatever virtues or endowments he possessed, he never could have been peaceably and generally recognized for sovereign of France, if he had not assumed the religion of the people, over whom he was called to reign (152).

(151) Sully, vol. i. p. 17.

(152) Lettre de du Fresne, in the Memoires de Villeroy, vol. ii. p. 77—175.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

State of literature, the ſciences, and the fine arts.—Natural philoſophy.—Aſtronomy.—Pharmacy.—Juriſprudence.—Eloquence.—Hiſtory.—Poetry.—Polite letters.—Erudition of the age.—Imitation of the antients.—Protection of learning, and learned men.—Progreſs of the art of printing.—Libels.—Libraries.—State of the drama.—Paſſion for romances.—Mode, and ſeminaries of education.

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THE grandeur of ſtates and ſovereigns is not determined ſolely by their extent of dominion, by the magnitude of their fleets and armies, or even by the general riches and felicity of the people. To be entitled to the appellation of Great, it is neceſſary that the arts and ſciences ſhould be held in honor, and that polite letters ſhould be univerſally cultivated and diffuſed. It is the acknowledged privilege of genius, to immortalize not only its poſſeſſors, but even its protectors. The princes of Medicis, though, in fact, only the firſt merchants of Italy, and the firſt citizens of a ſmall republic, ſituated among the Apennines; have acquired a reputation far ſuperior to that of the moſt powerful monarchs, their contemporaries. Francis the Firſt, who emulated their fame, and followed their traces, diffuſed the luſtre of his name over Europe, more by the protection and cultivation of letters, than by his victories, or military atchievements. His exertions to awaken the dormant talents of his ſubjects, were not ineffectual; and in the courſe of a reign of more than thirty years, he had the ſatisfaction to behold the commencement of that light, which gradually

Glory, annexed to the protection of letters.

Protection, extended to them by Francis the Firſt.

CHAP. IV. and by his succeſſors.

dually ſpreading and augmenting, attained to its meridian, in the following century, under Louis the Fourteenth. His ſon, Henry the Second, however inferior in the enthuſiaſtic love of arts and ſciences, extended his munificence to their profeſſors (1). Even Charles the Ninth, in the intervals of civil war and maſſacre, unbent himſelf by the ſofter occupations of poetry and muſic; in the former of which he did not diſdain to compoſe (2). He was accuſtomed to hold an academy, twice every week, in his own cabinet, at which men of letters and ladies aſſiſted, where queſtions of a literary nature were agitated and diſcuſſed (3). It is clear, by the expreſſions of d'Aubigné, that Hugonots were not excluded from this ſociety. He may be regarded as a ſingular inſtance in the hiſtory of mankind, of a prince whoſe ferocity was not humanized by the ſtudy of letters. His brother and ſucceſſor, Henry the Third, immerſed in pleaſures, or engaged in hypocritical exerciſes of devotion, found little leiſure for the elegant reſearches of taſte and genius: he was, notwithſtanding, liberal in his donations to thoſe who were diſtinguiſhed by their talents in every branch of art; and Deſportes, the poet, held the ſame rank in his affections, which Ronſard had enjoyed in the favor of his predeceſſor (4).

State of ſcience.

When we conſider the ſtate of the ſciences, at the period of which we are treating, we muſt be compelled to admit, that they were only in their infancy. Scarcely any thing was taught in the ſchools, except dialectics, and the Ariſtotelian philoſophy. Such was the degree of idolatry paid to the Stagyrite, that Ramus, who periſhed at the maſſacre of Paris, was dragged through the ſtreets, and his body

(1) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 55 and 59.
(2) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 64.
(3) D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. p. 184. (4) L'Etoile, p. 88.

afterwards

afterwards thrown into the Seine, by the ſtudents who followed the Ariſtotelian doctrines, which Ramus had combated and expoſed (5). Natural philoſophy, founded on experiments, was, in a great meaſure, unknown; and even aſtronomy had not advanced beyond its firſt rudiments. Copernicus had, indeed, from an obſcure and remote city of Poliſh Pruſſia, diſcloſed the ſyſtem which bears his name, and acquainted the world with the true poſition and revolutions of the celeſtial bodies, towards the cloſe of the reign of Francis the Firſt. But, that great truth, combated by the ſuperſtitious prejudices of the times, made its way ſlowly and progreſſively, through the European nations. France does not ſeem to have poſſeſſed any aſtronomer of eminence, before the deceaſe of Henry the Third; and both in Germany and Italy, far greater diſcoveries had been made in the ſiſter ſciences of aſtronomy and philoſophy. True chemiſtry was equally neglected; while aſtrologers and alchemiſts, availing themſelves of the ignorance and credulity of princes, filled every court, and were held in univerſal eſtimation. Henry the Third, without information, or examination, but, from deference to the Holy See, cauſed the Gregorian calendar and computation of time to be received among the French. It was, in ſome meaſure, ſurreptitiouſly regiſtered by the Parliament of Paris, in the abſence of the preſident, Harlay. Science had no ſhare whatever in its adoption, which took place immediately after its promulgation at Rome by Gregory the Thirteenth, on the 10th of December, 1582. That day was counted for the twentieth of the month (6). Similar motives of obedience to

Philoſophy.

Reception of the Gregorian calendar in France.

(5) Biograph. Diction. vol. xi. p. 28. Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 55 and 56.

(6) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 662. Lettres de Paul de Foix, p. 611 and 616.

the

CHAP. IV.

the court of Rome, induced the duke of Anjou, then acknowledged as ſovereign of the Low Countries, to its introduction among the Flemings (7). Before the year 1563, the French were accuſtomed to reckon from Eaſter day, as the firſt of the year. The famous chancellor l'Hopital cauſed it to be altered to the firſt of January; but, the Parliament did not regiſter the edict till 1564 (8).

Pharmacy. It may be juſtly queſtioned, whether pharmacy and ſurgery had attained to a much higher point of perfection, than the ſciences already enumerated.

Anatomy. Anatomy was very imperfectly known, or ſtudied: ſcarcely had the prejudices which oppoſe themſelves to the diſſection of the human body, been overcome. Emetics were never adminiſtered; and ſome of the moſt powerful medicines, uſed in the cure of diſeaſes, were undiſcovered. The Peruvian bark, the only ſpecific in intermitting fevers, had not yet been imported from the New World, and lay concealed in the mountains of South America. Even the circulation of the blood was only ſurmiſed, and by no means aſcertained. Yet, the age produced ſome illuſtrious names, who drew from their contemporaries the moſt extravagant encomiums. Fernel, phyſician to Francis the Firſt, was regarded as a man of conſummate ſkill. He received a penſion of two thouſand, five hundred crowns, for having rendered Catherine of Medicis, then dauphineſs, capable of producing children. Her ſterility had given riſe to reports of an intention to repudiate that princeſs, who was no longer ſuſtained by the credit of Clement the Seventh (9). Fernel's reputation was eclipſed by the fame of Ambroſe Paré, a Hugonot, whoſe talents exempted him from the

Fernel.

Paré.

(7) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 662 and 663.
(8) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 119.
(9) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 284. Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 55.

maſſacre

maſſacre of Paris, by the perſonal interpoſition of Charles the Ninth (10). With him, the ſcience of pharmacy, and the practice of ſurgery, may be ſaid to have ariſen among the French, from whom they were gradually diffuſed over the northern nations. His works, which appeared towards the concluſion of the reign of Henry the Third, and which were dedicated to that prince, bear teſtimony to the acuteneſs of his talents, the ſuperiority of his views, and the indefatigable attention paid by him, to ameliorate the mode of treating the objects of his care. In defiance of vulgar prejudices, and the remonſtrances of his countrymen, who were deſirous of concealing from the world, the myſteries of the medical profeſſion; Paré addreſſed his writings to mankind, not as his predeceſſors had been accuſtomed, under the veil of a learned language, but, in his own (11).

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Before the year 1536, when he commenced his practice, as one of the ſurgeons attending on the army of Francis the Firſt, in Piémont; ſo ignorant were all the practitioners in that important branch of art, that the firſt elements of it were unknown. We can ſcarcely believe, that the preparation and ingredients of gunpowder were conſidered as poiſonous; and that it was univerſally cuſtomary, in order to deterge and cleanſe the wounds, cauſed by firearms, to apply to them boiling oil (12). John de Vigo, a celebrated phyſician, whoſe writings and opinions were received as oracular and infallible, had recommended this pernicious application, previous to every other dreſſing, or digeſtive. Paré ingenuouſly confeſſes, that, ſubdued and awed by ſo high an authority, he purſued it; and it was only from the failure of a ſupply of oil in the camp, that

(10) Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 166.
(11) Œuvres d'Ambroiſe Paré, à Lyon, 1652, Au Lecteur, p. 4, 5.
(12) Œuvres de Paré, au Lecteur, p. 265—267.

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CHAP. IV.

he was compelled to ſubſtitute a leſs deſtructive application. "Yet, terrified," ſays he, "at my own "boldneſs, in thus venturing to deviate from the "mode of practice; and apprehenſive, that I ſhould "find the patients, whoſe wounds I had not cauterized by the uſe of boiling oil, dead of poiſon; "I was unable to ſleep, and I roſe from my bed, at "an early hour, to viſit them. But, beyond my "hopes, I found thoſe, to whom, from neceſſity, "I had adminiſtered a digeſtive of a milder nature, "compoſed of the yolk of eggs, oil of roſes, and "turpentine, free from pain, inflammation, or tumours, having repoſed well during the night. On "the contrary, the perſons, whoſe wounds had "been waſhed with hot oil, were in a ſtate of "fever, with violent ſymptoms of every kind. "From that time, I reſolved never more to burn "thus cruelly the poor wretches, afflicted with "gun-ſhot wounds (13)."

It was, therefore, in this inſtance, as in almoſt all the other diſcoveries of art, only accident, which firſt led the way to ſo beneficial an alteration in the practice of ſurgery. We may eaſily conceive, how prodigious muſt have been the mortality in camps and armies, under the antient ſyſtem. Every page of Paré's works bears teſtimony to it. To his laborious reſearches, and unwearied exertions, was likewiſe due, the introduction and improvement of almoſt all the principal inſtruments, ſtill uſed in ſurgery. Thoſe for performing the operation of the trepan, were greatly perfected by him (14); and the accumulated honors, preſents, and emoluments, conferred on him, not only by the French kings, but by foreign princes and nobles, evince the high admiration entertained for his talents, all over Europe.

(13) Œuvres de Paré, au Lecteur, p. 263, 264, and p. 782, 783.
(14) Ibid. p. 787.

One

One of the moſt famous cures performed in ſurgery, during the period under our conſideration, was that of Francis, duke of Guiſe, wounded at the ſiege of Bologne, under Henry the Second. The ſtump of a lance which entered between his noſe and his eye, was extracted by Nicholas Lavernan, with ſo much delicacy and ſucceſs, as neither to impair his ſight in the ſmalleſt degree, nor to leave any unpleaſing ſcar. So deeply was it fixed in the duke's head, that, in order to draw it out, Lavernan was obliged to lay his foot upon the head of the patient, and to exert his utmoſt force (15). The operation was eſteemed a maſter piece of art and ſkill. We may judge how little the uſe of ſtyptics was known as late as 1582, by the inſtance of William the Firſt, prince of Orange. After the wound that he received from the piſtol ball of Jaureguy, which paſſed through both his cheeks, hot irons were immediately applied to cauterize the parts. That expedient appeared, at firſt, to ſucceed; but, on the tenth day, the cruſt which had formed, fell: the bleeding recommenced, and with ſo much violence, that no means could be diſcovered of ſtopping it, or of cloſing the veſſels. In ſo critical an emergency, Leonard Botal, an Italian of Aſti, in Piémont, phyſician to the duke of Anjou, adviſed, as the only means left, to ſtop the wound by the application of the thumb, and to employ men, who ſhould inceſſantly relieve each other, for the purpoſe. The advice was followed, and contributed to ſave the prince's life (16). Tavannes loudly arraigns and condemns the practice of ſurgery, as it exiſted in his time. He ſays, that it was cuſtomary to open all gun-ſhot, or other wounds, with ſuch indiſcretion, as to produce im-

Surgery.

Styptics.

(15) Brantome, vol. iii. Cap Fran. p. 121. Œuvres de Paré, p. 785.
(16) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 614.

poſthumes

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posthumes or discharges, more fatal to the patient than the original wound itself. It would seem, that few persons recovered, or received a perfect cure. "The lancet," says he, "is more destructive than "the ball (17)."

Study of jurisprudence.

Notwithstanding the venality and corruption which polluted the courts of law, the study of jurisprudence was held in the highest honor, and the profession of a civilian was equally respectable and profitable. Cujas, a native of Toulouse, attained a vast reputation for his proficiency in the civil law, under the last princes of Valois. He was esteemed an oracle of knowledge; and he received from his own sovereign, as well as from foreigners, the most flattering marks of respect and consideration (18).

Oratory of the bar.

Of the oratory of the bar, we have few specimens remaining; but, from the description given us by l'Hopital, of the celebrated pleading before the Parliament of Paris, under Henry the Second, in 1550; when the case of the Protestants massacred at Merindole and Cabrieres, was solemnly argued; we may judge that it had attained to no common degree of force, energy, and sublimity (19). That the profession of a lawyer, employed in civil and criminal causes, was a very lucrative

Fees.

one, is equally apparent. Fees seem to have been nearly as ample, if the relative value of money be considered, as in the present age; but, they appear to have been given, rather as the recompence of successful eloquence and exertion, than in every event of a suit. Under Henry the Second, we find a sum equal almost to two pounds sterling, offered by a rich client to his counsel, who had gained a cause of a slender pecuniary consequence, after a short pleading of less than two hours. The money

(17) Tavannes, p. 66 and 67.
(18) Papire Masson. in vita Cujas.
(19) Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. i. Epitres, p. 29—33.

was

was refuſed and returned, as inadequate to the trouble and merit; not without expreſſions of reſentment at ſo inſufficient a reward (20).

Eloquence had not diveſted itſelf, in the ſixteenth century, of pedantry, affectation, and the falſe ornaments of a corrupt and unformed taſte. This ſtyle of oratory and declamation was long retained, and ſlowly abandoned. It is, notwithſtanding, matter of curious remark, that in the two harangues of Henry the Third to the States General, in 1577, and in 1588, the purity of diction, ſimplicity, and energy of the compoſition, might vie with thoſe of almoſt any period. The latter ſpeech is long, pathetic, and dignified; diſgraced by no unnatural alluſions, or conceits; but, containing a clear expoſition of the calamities of the kingdom, and exhorting, or pointing out the obvious, and neceſſary remedies. It might have been pronounced by Auguſtus, in the Roman Senate; or, by Louis the Fourteenth, at any period of his reign (21). But, when we peruſe the ſpeeches of Montholon, keeper of the ſeals, and of Renaud de Beaune, archbiſhop of Bourges, in the ſame aſſembly, we find ourſelves tranſported to another century. Scripture, and mythology, profane and ſacred hiſtory, are ranſacked for matter. Joſhua, and Solomon, and Aſa, are mingled with Druids, and princes of the Merovingian and Carlovingian lines (22). The archbiſhop of Bourges compares the king, at the opening of his ſpeech, to Neſtor in wiſdom, and to Ulyſſes in eloquence. After a compliment to the queen-mother, whom he denominates another Irené, he exhorts Henry to emulate the example and heroic actions of Hercules and Theſeus; of Moſes, Joſhua, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, David, Manaſſes, Auguſ-

Eloquence.

Style of Henry the Third's harangue.

Speeches of Montholon, and Bourges.

(20) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 88 and 89.
(21) De Thou, vol. vii. p 448—451; and vol. x. p. 373—383.
(22) De Thou, vol. x. p. 383—389.

tus,

CHAP. IV.

tus, Veſpaſian, and Mithridates. He proceeds to draw a parallel between Solomon and the French monarch; concluding by a fervent wiſh, that he might exceed in longevity, Arganthonius, king of Gibraltar (23).

Harangue of Bellievre to Elizabeth.

If we would wiſh to form a perfect idea of the ſpecies of eloquence then uſed by ſtateſmen and miniſters, we have only to peruſe the harangue of Bellievre, the French embaſſador, to Elizabeth, queen of England, pronounced in 1587. The motive of his addreſs, was to deprecate and prevent the execution of the unfortunate Mary, queen of Scots. Bellievre, in order to prove that ſovereigns are not amenable to any earthly tribunal, cites a hymn of Callimachus, who ſays, that Jupiter alone can judge kings. Having remarked from Plato, that the nature of ordinary men is compoſed of iron and lead, while that of princes is formed of gold; he proves by citations from Homer and Virgil, as well as by the example of Xenocrates, how ſacred the rights of hoſpitality have been ever eſteemed. He reminds her of Alexander's treatment of the Thebans, taken in the Perſian camp; and of Totila's conduct towards Antiſtia, the wife of Boethius. Having compared the Scottiſh queen to Conradin, beheaded by Charles of Anjou, and to Saul, when in the power of David; he next talks of Regulus and Elius Verus. But, above all, he implores her to imitate the empreſs Livia, in her advice to Auguſtus, reſpecting the conſpiracy of Cinna and Pompey (24). Elizabeth, who wanted no reaſons, nor precedents, to juſtify a meaſure, on which ſhe had long determined, heard the embaſſador patiently: oppoſed to the authorities and examples which he had ſo laborioufly quoted, others

(23) De Thou, vol. x. p. 389—391.
(24) Ibid. vol. ix. p. 627—637.

favorable

favorable to her own intentions; and ſtruck off the head of her priſoner (25). CHAP. IV.

No great, nor eminent hiſtorian aroſe in France, during the period under our review. Comines belongs to the preceding age; and neither De Thou, nor Davila, had yet appeared; if, indeed, the latter can, with ſtrictneſs, be regarded as a French writer. Henry the Second, at the ſolicitation of the cardinal of Lorrain, had named a hiſtoriographer; annexed to the title a ſalary of about ſixty pounds ſterling; and even furniſhed materials for the hiſtory of his own reign and exploits: but, no progreſs was made in the work (26). We cannot ſufficiently regret, that the Memoirs, compoſed by Coligni, upon the events of his own time, and in particular, upon the civil wars, do not exiſt. The manuſcript, found after the admiral's death, was brought to Charles the Ninth, and burnt by advice of marſhal Retz (27). Montluc is only a plain, unlettered ſoldier, who commemorates his own military actions, under the name of "Commentaries." The "political and military Diſcourſes" of La Noue breathe the candour, veracity, and ſound reflexion, by which, in every part of his life, their author was diſtinguiſhed: but, they cannot emulate the praiſe of hiſtory. Tavannes's "Memoirs" contain much valuable and ſecret information on the events to which he was witneſs, and many of which he directed or adviſed. But, it is to be lamented, that his ſon, who gave them to the world, has mutilated, altered, and defaced them in numerous particulars. Caſtelnau muſt be eſteemed the fineſt writer of the four: he is modeſt, ſuccinct, clear, and perfectly well informed upon all the points which he relates, or diſcuſſes. He is, notwithſtand-

Hiſtory.

Montluc.

La Noue.

Tavannes.

Caſtelnau.

(25) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 637.
(26) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 52—55.
(27) Ibid. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 194 and 198.

ing,

CHAP. IV.

ing, inferior in every point of view, to his model, Philip de Comines.

French language.

The French language had not attained either to elegance, or purity, before the acceſſion of Henry the Second. Men of taſte and genius diſdained to

Poetry.

employ it as the vehicle of their compoſitions. Latin was commonly uſed by the poets; who found their own language too rough and unharmonious, for the fetters of verſe. The fineſt productions of

Preference given to the Latin language.

that kind, before the middle of the ſixteenth century, were in Latin. Marot, who eclipſed the fame of all his predeceſſors, firſt quitted the language of Horace, to adopt that of his own country (28). The names and works of St. Gelais, Jodelle, Baïf, Belleau, Dorat, and Deſportes, who formed the admiration of the court, under Francis the Firſt and his deſcendants, are now in a great meaſure forgotten; or, only remembered by ſome happy lines, which have eſcaped the general oblivion. In all their writings, a redundancy of learning, and a ſervile imitation of the antients, is viſible. Charmed with the great models of Greece and Rome, they dreſſed themſelves in their borrowed ornaments, without reflecting that the grace and delicacy of the original, could not be transfuſed, or preſerved in the copy.

Marot.

Marot may be regarded as the father and creator of the French verſe. To him is due the invention of the Sonnet, the Rondeau, and the Madrigal, which were unknown before the ſixteenth century, in France (29). He flouriſhed during the reign of Francis the Firſt, by whom he was careſſed, protected, and rewarded; but, his religious opinions, which were ſuppoſed to be tinctured with hereſy,

(28) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 412—414. Vie de Ronſard, par Binet, Paris, 1604, p. 128 and 175.

(29) Œuvres de Marot, 2 vols. Geneve, paſſim. Baillet, Jugement, ſur les Poëtes, tom. iii. p. 206.

compelled

compelled him to quit the kingdom, and to ſeek an asylum at Geneva. He died in a ſpecies of exile, at Turin, in Piémont, which was then occupied by the French forces. This event took place in 1544 (30): Such was the elegance and beauty of his verſification in his native language, that none of the poets, if we except Ronſard, who formed the "Pleiad," or conſtellation of poetic genius, under the laſt princes of Valois, could equal him in thoſe endowments (31). La Fontaine, in the enſuing century, confeſſed his admiration for, and his obligations to Marot, as one of his maſters, and models (32). The indecencies, to be found in his compoſitions, are, in a great degree, to be charged to the taſte or manners of the period in which he lived; and may derive ſome apology, if not juſtification, from reflecting, that ſcarcely any of the greateſt Roman poets of the Auguſtan age, are free from the ſame blemiſhes. Nothing could exceed the vogue, which Marot's Tranſlation of the Pſalms into French, obtained, under Francis the Firſt. The emperor, Charles the Fifth, to whom he preſented them, rewarded him by a donation of near two hundred pounds ſterling; a ſum of very conſiderable magnitude in that century; and which, even in this, would not be eſteemed ſmall (33). CHAP. IV.

St. Gelais was the contemporary, and the rival of Marot; but, with inferior talents and reputation. His verſes are eaſy, flowing, and ſometimes beautiful; ornamented with mythological alluſions, and a variety of learning. The greater part of his compoſitions are on ſubjects of a light and temporary nature, calculated for the amuſement of a gay and voluptuous court; ſuch as were thoſe of Francis St. Gelais.

(30) Bayle. Dict. Art. "Marot," p. 154, 155.
(31) La Bruyere, Caracteres, p. 82.
(32) La Fontaine, Ouvrages Poſthumes, p. 107.
(33) Bayle. Dict. Article "Marot," p. 160.

the

CHAP. IV. the Firſt, and Henry the Second. He ſurvived his competitor Marot, and died in Paris, in 1558 (34.)

Jodelle. To Jodelle is due the revival of tragedy, as formed upon the models of antiquity. His "Cleopatra" was performed with incredible applauſe, by order of Henry the Second, at Paris (35). Belleau is principally known by his tranſlations of the Odes of Anacreon. But, neither he, nor Dorat, could conteſt the pre-eminence of poetical fame and genius, with Ronſard. The invention of Anagrams, a paſſion for which, became univerſal among the French, is attributed to Dorat (36).

Deſportes. Deſportes may be ſaid to terminate the liſt of poets, who flouriſhed under the laſt kings of Valois. He was enriched by the profuſion of Henry the Third, and even acted no inconſiderable political part, during the reign of Henry the Fourth. Deſportes is the Tibullus of France, amorous, impaſſioned, and querulous. His elegies, though unequal in purity and elegance, to thoſe of the Roman poet, are neither deficient in ſoftneſs, nor in harmony. He accompanied his patron and maſter, the duke of Anjou, into Poland; and he gives, in one of his poetical compoſitions, a hideous picture of the Poliſh manners, country, and nobility (37). In order to ſooth the diſtreſs of Henry the Third for the loſs of his two minions, Quelus and Maugiron, killed in a duel, Deſportes did not heſitate to proſtitute his talents, by compoſing epitaphs to their memory, and exhauſting panegyric in their praiſe (38). He was liberally rewarded for theſe

(34) Œuvres de St. Gelais, paſſim.
(35) Recherches de Paſquier, lib. vii. cap. vii. p. 618. Bayle. Dict. Art. "Jodelle," and "Belleau." Vie de Ronſard, p. 139.
(36) Bayle. Dict. Art. "Dorat," p. 618.
(37) Œuvres de des Portes, Antwerp, 1591, p. 427, 428.
(38) Ibid. p. 478—481.

ſervile

ſervile offerings of the muſe, by a prince, whoſe munificence towards his favorites, knew no limits.

The pre-eminence of poetical genius among the French, during the ſixteenth century, is unqueſtionably due to Ronſard. The univerſality of his talents, the extent and variety of his compoſitions, the profound erudition ſcattered throughout his writings, and the ſplendor of his diction, eclipſed thoſe of all his contemporaries. To him may be attributed the introduction of the higher and more ſublime ſpecies of poetry. The "Franciad," dedicated to Charles the Ninth, in whoſe honor it is compoſed, was the firſt epic poem, ſtrictly ſo denominated, that appeared in the French language. It was left imperfect, and unfiniſhed, on account of the premature and early death of that prince (39). However inferior to the great models of antiquity, which he copied, the "Franciad" of Ronſard, is neither defective in grandeur of conception, luxuriancy of fancy, nor harmony of verſification.

With him, aroſe comedy, likewiſe, in France. The "Plutus" of Ariſtophanes, which he tranſlated, was the earlieſt production of that kind, given to the inhabitants of Paris. It was performed, under the reign of Henry the Second, at the theatre of Coqueret, with univerſal applauſe (40). The diverſity of his compoſitions, in every branch of poetry, excites equal admiration and aſtoniſhment. If he was compared with Homer and Virgil, he may, with equal juſtice, be cited as the rival of Anacreon, Pindar, and Catullus. In many of his lighter pieces, which he entitles "Gayetez," we trace all the hilarity and wanton mirth of the Ionian poet. His "Dythirambics" contain the rich ſtream of harmony, and the unfettered grace of Pindar. The

(39) Œuvres de Ronſard, tom. iii. Paris, 1604, p. 1—213, paſſim.
(40) Vie de Ronſard, p. 125.

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poem, compoſed by him, to commemorate the feſtive offering of a goat, adorned with garlands, which was preſented as a teſtimony of homage to the genius of Jodelle, is peculiarly beautiful (41). The "Sonnets" of Ronſard to his miſtreſs, may be compared in warmth and tenderneſs, with thoſe of Catullus, to Leſbia. Even inanimate objects derived celebrity, and attained immortality, from his pen. The fountain of "Bellerie," in the Vendomois, became ſcarcely leſs renowned, than the claſſical ſpring of Blanduſia; and was one of his favorite ſubjects of poetic deſcription. He frequently retired to it, as Petrarch did to Vaucluſe, there to indulge his penſive meditations (42). Like Deſportes, he did not refuſe to commemorate the minions of Henry the Third. His epitaphs on Quelus and Maugiron, are elegant compoſitions, and models of courtly panegyric (43). If he is thought to have degraded the dignity of poetry, by compoſing an epitaph on the greyhound of Charles the Ninth, or the lap-dog of Madame de Villeroy; it may be remembered, that Pope, the proudeſt poet of the preſent century, who boaſts perpetually of his independance, and who affects to carry his indifference for crowned heads almoſt to contempt, was not aſhamed to write a diſtich for the Prince of Wales's dog at Kew. Ronſard conſulted more the majeſty of the weeping muſe, in his epitaphs on the conſtable Montmorenci, and on Philip de Comines (44).

From his earlieſt years, he was the companion and attendant of kings. After having accompanied James the Fifth of Scotland, on his return from France to his own dominions, as one of his pages,

(41) Œuvres de Ronſard, "Gayetez," p. 333—346.
(42) Vie de Ronſard, p. 149, and p. 178.
(43) Œuvres de Ronſard, "Epitaphes," p. 87—89.
(44) Ibid. p. 47—55, and p. 60—61, and p. 87—103.

he

he paſſed into the ſervice of Charles, duke of Or- CHAP. IV.
leans, youngeſt of the three ſons of Francis the Firſt (45). Henry the Second aſſociated him to all his paſtimes, and peculiarly to the martial exerciſes and diverſions, in which that monarch excelled. The force and addreſs of Ronſard in theſe exhibitions of corporal ſtrength and proweſs, were not leſs conſpicuous, than the elegance of his intellectual endowments (46). Charles the Ninth expreſſed for him the moſt partial affection, commanded him not to quit the court, and enriched him by the donation of various abbies, and eccleſiaſtical preferments. The verſes of Charles, addreſſed to Ronſard, are to be found among the works of the poet; and if they do little credit to the talents of the king, they, at leaſt, diſplay his attachment to the muſes (47). Under his ſucceſſor, Henry the Third, Ronſard was choſen for one of the members of an academy, in which the principal men of letters met, to converſe, and to communicate their reſpective compoſitions. It was held at the palace of the Louvre, in Henry's preſence (48).

Nor was his celebrity confined to France. It extended to other kingdoms, and was only limited by the language in which he wrote. Elizabeth, queen of England, delighted in his writings, and expreſſed her admiration for their author (49). Even the unfortunate Mary, queen of Scots, to whoſe charms he had done homage during the tranſitory reign of her firſt huſband, Francis the Second; in her ſolitary impriſonment at Tutbury and Fotheringay caſtles, ſoothed her calamities, by the peruſal of

(45) Vie de Ronſard, p. 115, 116.
(46) Ibid. p. 119, 120.
(47) Œuvres de Ronſard, tom. iii. p. 217—223. Vie de Ronſard, p. 141—144.
(48) Œuvres de Ronſard, tom. iii. p. 176 and 147.
(49) Vie de Ronſard, p. 147.

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Ronſard's works. As a proof of her eſteem, ſhe ſent him, in 1583, by Nau, her ſecretary, a ſilver buffet, valued at a thouſand crowns, with this inſcription on it, "A Ronſard, l'Apollon de la Source des Muſes (50)." At the ceremony of the "Floral Games," inſtituted and held in the city of Toulouſe, the preſidents, parliament, and people, unanimouſly decreed the pre-eminence to Ronſard. Not ſatisfied with conferring on him a wreath of eglantine, the cuſtomary reward of the victorious poet, they ſent him a ſtatue of Minerva in maſſy ſilver, accompanied with the moſt flattering teſtimonies of their admiration (51). His funeral was attended by the moſt illuſtrious perſons in France, for rank, talents, and virtue. The dukes of Angouleme and Joyeuſe, together with the cardinal of Bourbon, and the principal members of the Parliament of Paris, did not diſdain to follow in the cavalcade, and to perform the laſt honors to ſo diſtinguiſhed a genius (52). Du Perron, who became afterwards a cardinal, and who had already diſplayed talents of various kinds, pronounced his funeral oration (53). Such was the reſpect and eſtimation in which his works were held by foreign nations, that they were read as models of poetic beauty, in all the French ſchools of Flanders, England, Germany, and Poland (54). Like Hadrian, when expiring, he compoſed ſome lines, addreſſed to his departing ſoul, which are not inferior in vivacity, to thoſe attributed to the Roman emperor; of which they may be eſteemed a parody (55). Criticiſm itſelf was ſilent, or converted to panegyric, when employed upon Ronſard; and Scaliger, whoſe pen inſpired ſo much dread among his contemporaries, dedicated

(50) Vie de Ronſard, p. 147, 148.
(51) Ibid. p. 137, 138. (52) Ibid. p. 159, 160.
(53) Oraiſon funebre de du Perron, p. 184—240.
(54) Vie de Ronſard, p. 168, 169. (55) Ibid. p. 151.

to

to him, his favorite Anacreontics. We may judge of the reverential awe which Scaliger felt for the French poet, by the language which he uſes, in his addreſs. It is ſuch as Horace would have adopted, when ſpeaking of Homer: CHAP. IV.

" Quo te carmine, qua prece,
" Quo pingui genium thure, adeam tuum,
" Immenſi ſobolem ætheris,
" Qui muſis animi prodigus, imperas (56)?"

Notwithſtanding the obligations which the French language owes to Ronſard, in whoſe hands it became copious, rich, and melodious, he is not exempt from defects. But, they are, perhaps, more the faults of the age, than of the poet. His productions are loaded with mythology and fable; nor can we acquit him of ſome degree of impiety and profanation, in comparing the labours of Hercules, to thoſe of Jeſus Chriſt (57).

Rabelais and Montaigne, neither of whom were poets, are the only authors of the period, in the walk of polite letters, who can be ſaid to have eſcaped the general fate of their contemporaries, and to be read, after two centuries, beyond the limits of France. Rabelais, notwithſtanding the extreme indecency and low buffoonery of his writings, contains ſo much genuine and original humor, ſo much groteſque fancy, incidents ſo comic, ſatire ſo delicate and keen, mixed with learning ſo various and profound, that he muſt be for ever agreeable to mankind. It is probable, that the greater number of thoſe who peruſe the " Hiſtory of Gargantua and " Pantagruel," ſee in the work, only its eccentric and extravagant outſide. But, the ridicule of the church of Rome, of the Catholic religion, its cere- Rabelais. His ridicule of the Romiſh church.

(56) Vie de Ronſard, p. 167, 168.
(57) Bayle. Dict. Art. " Ronſard," p. 895, 896.

monies

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monies and injunctions, escapes continually through the disguise, under which Rabelais found it requisite to conceal so hazardous an attempt. It may excite some surprize, that a man who evidently despised and disbelieved the most essential articles of the Romish faith, should, after practising medicine, have been promoted to a prebend in a collegiate church, and made curate of Meudon, near Paris (58). The cardinal du Bellai, his patron, who protected, and preferred him, was not more persuaded of the sanctity of the religion, which he professed. That prelate, in defiance of the injunctions of the Romish see, had not hesitated to contract a marriage with madame de Chatillon, though motives of convenience induced him to conceal the transaction (59). The veil of affected folly and absurdity, under which Rabelais aimed his shafts at popes and princes, saved him from punishment; while the Protestants, who gravely and morosely attacked the pontifical power and dignity, were seized and committed to the flames. Rabelais belongs to the age of Francis the First, and Henry the Second; under the latter of which kings he ended his days, at an advanced period of life.

Montaigne.

Montaigne flourished under the last princes of Valois, and survived the extinction of that family. His "Essays" are equally original, and not less amusing, than the writings of Rabelais. He was a man of condition; and the careless, but, graceful negligence of a gentleman, characterizes his style.

Genius of his writings.

Though he talks perpetually, and almost exclusively, of himself, his egotism never offends, and generally entertains. Ease and nature seem to guide his pen; which is, however, disgraced by equal transgressions of decency, with those to be found in Rabelais, and

(58) Œuvres de Rabelais, Vie, vol. i. p. 4.
(59) Brantome, vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 177—180.

in

in Brantome. An intimate acquaintance with the Greek and Roman writers is visible throughout every page of Montaigne. He oppresses us with citations from all the poets; and he never disdains to fortify, or support his positions, by an appeal to their authority. He is a sceptic, and takes little pains to disguise it, though he chose to live and die within the pale of the Catholic church. We may judge of the avidity with which his Essays were devoured by the public, when we reflect, that even civil war, and every kind of internal calamity, could not impede their reception. They first appeared in 1580, under Henry the Third; and in 1588, a period of rebellion and anarchy, he published the fifth edition, at Paris, amidst the convulsions of the League (60). CHAP. IV.

Architecture.

Catherine of Medicis, descended from a family immortalized by their protection of all the arts, and desirous of transplanting them into France, constructed the palace of the Tuilleries, which she commenced in 1564, soon after the termination of the first civil wars. Philibert de Lorme, and John Bullan, were the architects whom she employed to raise that stately edifice, which she completed before her decease, notwithstanding the troubles of the kingdom, and the exhausted state of the finances (61). It was, unquestionably, the finest monument of architecture, then to be found, beyond the Alps. Louis de Foix, a native of Paris, began, in 1584, the celebrated tower of Cordouan, at the mouth of the river Garonne; designed as a pharos, or light-house, to direct the ships bound to, and from, the port of Bourdeaux. Its position was on a rock in the midst of the sea, exposed to the utmost fury of the elements. Three stories, ornamented with the

(60) Journal du Voyage de Montaigne, Disc. prelim, vol. i. p. 64 and 65.

(61) L'Art de Ver. vol. i. p. 648.

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different orders of architecture, and terminating pyramidically, formed the tower; whose solidity, proportions, and strength, have secured its duration to the present time. It was not entirely completed till the year 1611 (62).

Painting, and sculpture.

No regular school of painting, or sculpture, had appeared in France, before the extinction of the race of Valois. The exertions of Francis the First had nevertheless awakened the genius of the nation, in both those branches of art. John Gougeon, and Germain Pillon, were esteemed very expert sculptors, and had attained to a high degree of reputation, under Henry the Third (63). Leonardo da Vinci, who expired in the arms of Francis the First, was an Italian, and does not seem to have left behind him any eminent pupils. Scarcely a single statue of bronze, or of marble, ornamented the metropolis, in 1589. The monuments, erected by Henry, to the memory of his three minions, St. Megrin, Quelus, and Maugiron, in the church of St. Paul, which were composed of the most costly materials; had been demolished by the fury of the Parisians, on their receiving the intelligence of the assassinations committed at Blois (64). Medals, commemorative of great or auspicious events, were frequently struck, and scattered among the people, or distributed as marks of distinction. Considerable delicacy was displayed in their fabrication, as well as in the devices or legends with which they were ornamented. Jane, queen of Navarre, in 1569, presented gold medallions to the principal German commanders of the auxiliary army. On them were inscribed mottos, containing an allusion to their perilous situation, and

Medals.

(62) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 204. Dict. Univ. de la France, vol. i. p. 467—469.

(63) Satyre Men. vol. ii. p. 403.

(64) L'Etoile, p. 114.

religious

religious union (65). Three years afterwards, at the nuptials of Henry, king of Navarre, with Margaret of Valois, gold and silver medals were thrown to the populace. The inscription, "Con- "stricta hoc discordia vinculo," was designed to signify the extinction of past animosities, to be produced by the marriage (66). CHAP. IV.

The feature which peculiarly distinguished and characterized the age, was erudition. Letters, which had revived in Italy about the middle of the fifteenth century, did not penetrate into France till above sixty years later. It was Francis the First who cherished, patronized, and rendered their study general. The productions of Athens and of Rome, in poetry, history, eloquence, and philosophy, became known to the French; and all the beauties of the antients, were embellished by the charms of novelty. Captivated with graces so much superior to every other, and with which they had been hitherto unacquainted; they knew no limit to their enthusiastic admiration. All classes of society caught the infection: princes, nobles, soldiers, and even ladies, cultivated learning; and became familiar with the language of Cicero, and of Homer. Erudition was deemed necessary for attaining to employments of state; and ambition derived support from the study of letters. L'Hopital owed, in a great measure, his progressive elevation, through the various dignities of the law, to its highest eminence; not so much to his knowledge of jurisprudence, as to his reputation for science (67). Coligni, in the midst of civil war, found leisure to read the Roman writers, and conversed with fluency and elegance in Latin (68). Marshal Strozzi, though engaged

Erudition.

Enthusiasm for the literary productions of antiquity.

Examples.

Strozzi.

(65) Memoires de Cast. vol. i. p. 241.
(66) Vie de Marg. de Val. p. 87.
(67) Trad. de l'Hop. Eclairciss. vol. i. p. 9 and 10.
(68) Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 197.

during

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during his whole life, in the tumult of a camp, tranſlated the Commentaries of Cæſar into Greek, with notes and applications calculated for rendering the original more intelligible, or uſeful, to men of the military profeſſion. "I have heard Ronſard and "Durant," adds Brantome, "expreſs their amaze- "ment at the purity and eloquence of the Greek "tranſlation, which, in their eſtimation, was not "inferior to the Latin of the Roman dictator (69)."

Henry the Third, and the king of Navarre.

It was the ordinary amuſement of Henry the Third, to retire, after dinner, to his cloſet, with Baccio del Bene, and Corbinelli, two learned Florentines, who read to him the works of Polybius and of Tacitus, in their original languages (70.) Henry, king of Navarre, though naturally averſe to ſedentary and ſtudious occupations; yet, was verſed in Greek, and accuſtomed, from his infancy, to cite or repeat paſſages from their poets and hiſtorians. It is a well-known anecdote, that, while yet a child, he adopted for his motto, the words, "ἢ νικᾶν, ἢ ἀποθανεῖν," either conquer, or die: and that he refuſed to explain their meaning to the queen-mother, Catherine of Medicis, who was anxious to know their import (71).

Princeſſes.

L'Hopital addreſſed many of his Latin epiſtles to Margaret, daughter of Francis the Firſt, ducheſs of Savoy; and that princeſs, to whom her father, when expiring, recommended the protection of the muſes, improved herſelf by the frequent ſtudy of Cicero and of Horace (72). When the Poliſh embaſſadors, in 1573, arrived at Paris, to lay their crown at the feet of the duke of Anjou; the biſhop of Cracow, one of the number, having harangued the young queen of Navarre, Margaret, in Latin;

(69) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Etrang. p. 261 and 262.
(70) Davila, p. 148.
(71) Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 248.
(72) Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. ii. p. 123—134. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 706.

ſhe

she instantly replied in the same language, recapitulating, and answering every part of his speech, with facility and precision (73). Catherine of Medicis, less skilled in the languages of antiquity, employed an interpreter on the same occasion. Her selection fell on Catherine de Clermont, one of the most beautiful and accomplished ladies of the court; but, not more eminent for the graces of her person, than for her erudition (74). Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre, and Renée, duchess of Ferrara, daughter of Louis the Twelfth, two princesses who embraced the reformed doctrines, were distinguished by their proficiency in, as well as by their protection of learning. CHAP. IV.

Imitations of the antients.

To such a point of perfection was the imitation of the antients carried, that many of the productions of l'Hopital, and of Morvilliers, bishop of Orleans, were not distinguishable by the ablest critics, from the writings of antiquity. The epistle of l'Hopital, to James du Faur, intitled "An Imprecation against "Suits at Law," deceived the learned so completely, as to be not only attributed to various Roman poets; but, to exercise ingenuity in pointing out the interpolations and alterations, introduced into the original text (75). We may see in d'Aubigné, how elegant were the Latin verses, composed by the young nobility; and what facility they possessed in making them, upon every occasion (76). Even from the pageants and amusements of the court, the Latin language was not excluded; and females of the highest distinction recited Roman poetry, with equal grace and elegance. At a species of masque, represented before Henry the Second, at St. Ger-

(73) Vie de Marg. p. 122.
(74) Ibid. p. 122. Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 102—105.
(75) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 137—144 Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. i. p. 494, and p. 504.
(76) D'Aub. Mem. p. 85 and 89.

main,

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main, near Paris, in 1554; in which ſix ladies, or princeſſes, habited as Sybils, performed the principal parts; Mary, queen of Scots, then in very early youth, perſonated the Delphic Sybil. Addreſſing herſelf to the Dauphin, her deſtined huſband, who was afterwards Francis the Second, ſhe predicted in a diſtich, compoſed by St. Gelais, the poet, the future union, in his perſon, of the Britiſh and French crowns:

> "Delphica, Delphini ſi mentem oracula tangunt,
> "Britonibus junges regna Britanna tuis (77)."

A perfect acquaintance with the Latin language, was an indiſpenſable qualification for embaſſadors to many of the European courts, and highly introductory to all foreign miſſions and employments (78). French had not then been adopted as a general medium of converſation. Spaniſh was much more generally uſed; and it was the language of the Imperial court, as well as that of Madrid, till the reign of Rodolph the Second (79). Montaigne was inſtructed in Latin, before he was permitted to learn his native language; and ſo perfectly did he poſſeſs it, that the celebrated Buchanan, who was one of his preceptors, confeſſed, that he apprehended converſing with his pupil (80). D'Aubigné ſays, that at ſix years of age, he could read Latin, Greek, and Hebrew: when only in his eighth year, he tranſlated the "Crito" of Plato, into French (81). Military men compoſed their own epitaphs, or thoſe of their friends, ſlain in action. "When la Caſe de Miram-

Univerſality and vogue of the Latin language.

(77) Œuvres Poetiq. de St. Gelais, à Paris, 1719. p. 12, 13.
(78) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 776.
(79) Brantome, vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 78.
(80) Eſſais de Montaigne, vol. i. p. 254—256. Voyages de Montaigne, Diſc. Prelim. vol. i. p. 70 and 71. Biogr. Diction. vol. ix. p. 298.
(81) D'Aub. Mem. p. 4 and 5.

"beau

"beau was killed in 1574," says de Thou; "in his CHAP. IV.
"boot was found the following distich, written with
"his own hand, as if he had foreseen his end:

"Define migrantem lugere, viator, et hospes.
"Non careo patria: me caret illa magis (82)."

Latin verses.

The satirical sonnets, which originated on a thousand trifling subjects, and which were circulated in the courts of Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, were rarely in French. Wits and satirists preferred the Latin, as more expressive, and equally intelligible. The six elegant lines, composed by a courtier, in 1577, upon the comet, which was then visible, and whose appearance impressed Catherine of Medicis with so much terror, as well as most of the epigrams upon the minions, or ministers of Henry the Third, were written in the language and spirit of Martial (83). Brantome, who is only a dissolute man of the world, is yet an accomplished scholar.

Munificence to men of genius.

Never was greater munificence extended to men of genius, in every branch of art and science, than by the princes of Valois. The bounties of Louis the Fourteenth were dispensed with more parade and ostentation; but, they were neither more general, nor superior in extent. Francis the First, not satisfied with encouraging and recompensing literary merit in his own subjects, exerted himself to discover and reward it among every foreign nation. He sent several learned men, at his own expence, to travel into Greece, and the countries of Asia Minor, in order to collect antiquities, manuscripts, and other monuments (84). Royal professors, with liberal

(82) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 45.
(83) L'Etoile, p. 25 and 26, and p. 37, and p. 80. and p. 108. Mem. pour ser. à l'Hist. de Fr. p. 111, and p. 192 and 193.
(84) Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 241.

pecuniary

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pecuniary ſtipends, were appointed, to teach in the colleges, which he founded, or endowed. Such was his predilection for perſons diſtinguiſhed by a knowledge of letters, that he uſually made choice of them for embaſſies to the European courts (85).

Jovius.

Paul Jovius, the famous hiſtorian, enjoyed a penſion of two hundred and fifty crowns, from the treaſury, during that monarch's life: but the conſtable Montmorenci, with whoſe character and actions Jovius had taken ſome unwarrantable liberties, retrenched and ſtruck it off, at the acceſſion of Henry the Second (86). Notwithſtanding this ſingle inſtance of reſentment, expreſſed by a miniſter, whoſe alienation to, and unacquaintance with letters, was well known; Henry diſplayed the ſame princely regard for them, which had characterized his father.

Jodelle.

He was ſo charmed with the "Cleopatra," a tragedy of Jodelle, as to give the author a preſent of two hundred and fifty crowns, beſides other gratifications (87). Henry the Third preſented the poets, Ronſard and Baïf, each, a thouſand crowns, as a recompence for the beautiful verſes, compoſed by them on the occaſion of his favorite, Joyeuſe's marriage (88). Even religious prejudices and antipathies, which were ſo powerful in that age, did not prevent Henry the Third from ordering five hundred

Etienne.

crowns to be preſented to Henry Etienne, a Hugonot, who had written a work of much celebrity, upon the excellence of the French language (89). At the ceremony of the inauguration and inveſtiture of Francis, duke of Anjou, as ſovereign of the Netherlands, which was performed at Antwerp, in 1582; the deputies of the Proteſtants, in the act of

(85) Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 241. Biog. Diction. vol. ii. Artic. Budaus.

(86) Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 231 and 232.

(87) Ibid. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 59.

(88) L'Etoile, p. 46.

homage

homage and congratulation to their new prince, be- CHAP. IV.
fought of him to take under his protection, letters, and their profeſſors, and to honor them, according to the example left him by Francis the Firſt (90). He promiſed to comply with the requeſt. Prelates and cardinals expended the revenues of their eccleſiaſtical preferments, in the patronage of genius. The vices and irregularities of the cardinal of Lorrain were concealed and almoſt forgotten, in the munificent largeſſes with which he conciliated literary favor. He was the Mecœnas of the court of Henry the Second, and his two immediate ſucceſſors (91). Cardinal of Lorrain.

The art of printing, in the courſe of conſiderably more than a century, which had elapſed ſince its invention, had diffuſed very widely every ſpecies of knowledge, and penetrated among all orders of ſociety. The Morels, and the Etiennes, celebrated printers, carried the art at Paris, to a pitch of eminence, before the death of Henry the Second, in 1559 (92). One of the former family, convicted of hereſy, was burnt in the ſucceeding reign (93). Manutius, employed by the Venetians, and by various of the Romiſh pontiffs, had immortalized his own name, by giving to the world the moſt perfect and beautiful editions of Tully, as well as of many of the Greek and Roman writers. The fame of Aldus Manutius was ſuſtained by his ſon, who died in 1574 (94). Fourteen years afterwards, in 1588, Metayer, the royal printer at Paris, gave to the world a magnificent work, executed by order of Art of printing. Manutius.

(89) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 193.
(90) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 605.
(91) Brantome, vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 416. Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. i. p. 46.
(92) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 206.
(93) Trad de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 103.
(94) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 206. Biog. Dic. vol. ix. p. 52 and 53.

the

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the king. It contained the breviaries and prayers of the Romiſh ritual, in two folio volumes. The paper and the type were equally beautiful (95). With the benefits and advantages of printing, were proportionably diffuſed its evils. Under a reign ſuch as that of Henry the Third, when the royal conſideration and authority were ſo much relaxed, the preſs teemed with libels of the moſt inſolent nature. The Hugonots, after the death of Charles the Ninth, publiſhed ſeveral ſevere and ſatirical pieces againſt Catherine of Medicis, then regent during the abſence of Henry in Poland. She was exhorted by the council of ſtate, to puniſh the authors with rigor. But, her magnanimity diſdained the advice, and permitted an uninterrupted courſe to all the accuſations or calumnies of her enemies (96). Henry, on his return to France, did not imitate her in ſo ſhining a feature of her character. On the contrary, the only inſtances of rigor, which can be laid to his charge, which contraſt extraordinarily with the lenity, or apathy, demonſtrated in his general adminiſtration, were exerted againſt libellers. In March, 1577, while the court was at Blois, a ſatirical compoſition, in which the king, the queen-mother, and other perſons, were treated with extreme ſeverity, was laid under the bolſter of Catherine of Medicis's bed. It is not leſs ridiculous, than true, that for this crime, of which the author was unknown, all the poets about the court were immediately ſeized, and ſent to priſon (97).

Libels, numerous.

Severity exerciſed towards libellers.

The faction of the League, from its firſt formation, ſeems to have been fully ſenſible of the importance of the preſs; and the leaders made bold and frequent application to the paſſions of the people,

(95) Satyre Menippée, vol. ii. p. 150, 151.
(96) Davila, p. 418.
(97) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 177.

through

through its medium. In 1583, before the great convulſions which marked the cloſe of Henry's reign, Roziere, archdeacon of Toul, was brought before the council, to anſwer for having compoſed and publiſhed a book, entitled "Genealogy of the "dukes of Lorrain and Bar." The object of it was to prove, that Hugh Capet and his deſcendants were only uſurpers; and that the dukes of Lorrain were the genuine repreſentatives of Charlemagne. Some paſſages in the work were, likewiſe, of a nature perſonally inſulting and injurious to the king himſelf. Roziere would have infallibly expiated his offence by a public execution, if he had not been extricated by the powerful interpoſition of the duke of Lorrain, and the queen-mother (98.) Belleville, a Proteſtant gentleman, having, in the following year, committed a crime of leſs political magnitude, but, to which Henry was deeply ſenſible; by writing a ſatire on his private debaucheries, was inſtantly arreſted. Convicted of being the author, he was drawn in a ſledge to the place of execution, hanged, and his body, together with the work, thrown into the flames. All his eſtates and property were confiſcated (99). Even inſanity formed no protection againſt the rigor of the laws, in caſes of a libellous nature. Le Breton, a man of a heated and diſordered imagination, bred to the bar, ventured in 1586, to ſtigmatize the magiſtrates and ſovereign, with equally betraying the cauſe of the poor. Although in the courſe of his trial, he gave numerous indications of an alienated mind, and notwithſtanding the interceſſion of the judges themſelves, who beſought of the king to remit his puniſhment, he was condemned and executed (100). Theſe

Roziere.

Puniſhment of Belleville,

and of Le Breton.

(98) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 70 and 71.

(99) Ibid. p. 201 and 202. Mem pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 184

(100) Chron. Nov. vol. i p. 33 and 34. De Thou, vol. viii p 613—615. Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 213 and 214.

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exemplary chaſtiſements did not deter the heads of the League from publiſhing a variety of pamphlets, calculated to withdraw the obedience of the ſubject from the crown. Such was the avidity of the people to peruſe them, and ſo odious was the government, that no penalties could deter the printers or venders from circulating them through the metropolis. Impoſitions of the groſſeſt nature, and invectives the moſt bitter, were not ſpared, and met with a ready belief. The univerſal defection which followed, evinced how powerful an engine was the preſs, in the hands of a deſperate and unprincipled faction (101).

Powerful effect of the preſs.

Libraries.

Public and private libraries were already become common and general, before 1589. Francis the Firſt began the celebrated one, at the palace of Fontainbleau, of which Budæus, one of the moſt learned men of the age, was conſtituted librarian. It had attained to very conſiderable magnitude, before that prince's death (102). Catherine of Medicis, who emulated and imitated him, in the cultivation of letters, augmented it by ſo many coſtly works, manuſcripts, and books in every language, that, at her deceaſe, it was accounted the fineſt collection in Europe (103). She was not ſatisfied with forming a library for the crown, but, exerted equal efforts to poſſeſs one, herſelf, at Chenonceaux, a caſtle in Touraine, to which ſhe frequently retired.

Library of Strozzi,

We may form ſome eſtimate of its ſize and value, by knowing, that at the death of marſhal Strozzi, ſhe added his collection of books, calculated to be worth above ſeven thouſand crowns, to her own library (104). It is probable, that no private one in the kingdom, at that period, could compare in

(101) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 16 and 17.
(102) Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 241 and 242.
(103) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 132.
(104) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 263.

beauty,

beauty, or magnificence, with Strozzi's, who was of CHAP. IV.
of Florentine extraction, and had bought the library of cardinal Rodolfo at Rome, a prelate eminent for his taſte and erudition (105). The great chancellor, and of l'Hopital. l'Hopital, in 1573, only eſtimates his books, excluſive of memoirs, antiquities, and medals, at the ſum of five hundred livres, or little more than twenty pounds; and he expreſſes great anxiety in his will, that they may ſuffer no diminution (106).

The drama may be ſaid to have been ſtill in its infancy, during the whole period under our review. State of the drama. It was not till after the acceſſion of Henry the Second, that any dramatic exhibition was performed in France. Only myſteries, and a ſort of holy pageants or repreſentations, were known under Francis the Firſt, although Leo the Tenth had introduced them in Italy, before the year 1520. The cardinal of Ferrara, archbiſhop of Lyons, one of the moſt magnificent and accompliſhed princes of the age, firſt preſented to the French court, the ſpectacle of a tragi-comedy, in 1549, at Lyons. The performers, male and female, were brought by him, at a great expence, from Italy; and the piece was repreſented in the language of that country, with ſo much grace and ſpirit, accompanied with interludes, that the king, queen, and ſpectators, expreſſed the utmoſt delight at the entertainment. It was ſaid to have coſt the cardinal five thouſand crowns (107). Tragi-comedy. Its introduction into France.

St. Gelais, a French poet, having tranſlated the "Sophoniſba," of Triſſino, and ornamented or altered it in ſuch a manner, as to accommodate it to the taſte of his own country; it was performed by order of Catherine of Medicis, at Blois, ſoon after the commencement of Charles the Ninth's St. Gelais.

(105) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 263.
(106) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 492.
(107) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 20—22.

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reign (108). We find, that in 1564, a comedy, the subject of which was borrowed from Arioſto, was repreſented by her command, at Fontainbleau; and that the ducheſs of Angouleme, natural daughter of Henry the Second, together with the principal ladies of the court, filled the parts (109). In 1571, at the feſtival of Nogent le Roi, where every ſpecies of diverſion was exhibited, and where Charles the Ninth was preſent, it is expreſsly ſtated that a comedy was played by the king's comedians (110).

Dramatic amuſements of the Hugonots.

A circumſtance which may appear more ſingular, is, that the Hugonots, during the fury of the civil wars, had dramatic amuſements. They were calculated to awaken, and to ſuſtain religious enthuſiaſm. The ducheſs of Rohan compoſed a tragedy, called "Holophernes," drawn from the hiſtory of Judith, contained in the apocryphal writings of Scripture; and which was repreſented at Rochelle (111). In 1569, comedies were played at Niort in Poitou, while the Proteſtant armies aſſembled; and it may be doubted, whether the loſs of the battle of Jarnac ought not, in ſome meaſure, to be attributed to the negligence of the prince of Condé and the other commanders, who permitted the royal forces to collect in their neighbourhood, while they were engroſſed by theatrical entertainments. Such, at leaſt, was the opinion of the king of Navarre (112). That the pieces repreſented before the court of France, were of a nature much too indecent to be exhibited before any modern audience, cannot be doubted, if we peruſe the ſpecimen given us by Brantome, of one which was

Comedies.

Indecency of the theatrical repreſentations.

(108) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 51. Brant. ibid.
(109) Ibid. p. 56.
(110) Manuſcript de Bethune, N°. 8722, cited in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. p. 81.
(111) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 23.
(112) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 250.

acted

acted by order of Catherine of Medicis, and which was compoſed by Cornelio Fiaſco, a captain of a galley. It was, indeed, in Italian; but, that language was perfectly familiar to the audience. The comedies of Mrs. Behn, under Charles the Second, are the only productions which can convey an adequate idea of Fiaſco's compoſition (113). Political tranſactions were, likewiſe, frequently brought on the ſtage, under the diſguiſe of pantomime, and preſented with little refinement of conception or action. In 1579, upon the reconciliation of the Walloon provinces of Flanders with Philip the Second, that event was groſsly figured, by the emblematical appearance of a cow, in one of the comic entertainments, exhibited at Paris. The king of Spain conducted the animal by a very ſlight ſtring, which, as often as it broke, was mended by the prince of Parma. Elizabeth, queen of England, the duke of Anjou, the prince of Orange, and many other perſonages, approached, with deſign to liberate the cow: but, ſhe rudely repulſed them, and, after many gambols, quietly delivered herſelf up to the Spaniſh monarch (114). The application was obvious, and the piece met with great applauſe.

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Pantomimes.

Notwithſtanding the favorable reception given to dramatic compoſitions, the predominant taſte of the age was not directed towards the theatre. The national enthuſiaſm was awakened and concentered in the ſtudy of romances; and it is not eaſy to conceive the paſſionate admiration with which that ſpecies of writing was received. To the heated and eccentric imaginations of the Spaniards, was due the famous romance of "Amadis," which ſoon afterwards appeared in French, dedicated to Francis

Romances.

Amadis.

(113) Brantome, vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 328.
(114) Strada, de Bello Belg. vol. iii. p. 93 and 94.

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the First (115). Its vogue continued unabated, during that, and the succeeding reign. When we reflect, that these unnatural productions were filled with passionate declarations of love, with magicians, warriors, enchantments, battles, and marvellous adventures of a thousand kinds; we shall not wonder at the fondness manifested for them by the French. All the predominant vices, or follies of the times, were artfully flattered in the romance of "Amadis of Gaul." Judicial combats, duels, amours, and magic, constituted the pursuits of the courtiers; who saw themselves agreeably reflected in the most polished, and flattering mirror. La Noue attributes to the rage for romances, many of the crimes and impieties, which distinguished the two last reigns of the princes of Valois (116).

Nature of those productions.

Education.

The difference in the education of youth under Francis the First and Henry the Third, may likewise, account, in a considerable degree, for the augmenting depravity of manners between those periods. We may judge of the severity and simplicity of the former, by the curious relation which De Mesmes has left us in the discourse upon his own life; where we see the exact detail of the studies of the young men of condition in 1545. "I was sent," says he, "in that year, to Toulouse, "being fourteen years of age, to study the laws, "with my preceptor and my brother, under the "superintendance of an antient gentleman, grey-"headed, and who had long wandered through the "world. We were, for three years, auditors; lead-"ing a much stricter life, and studying more se-"verely, than persons of the present time would "support. We rose at four o'clock in the morn-"ing; and having addressed our prayers to God,

Mode of education under Francis the First.

(115) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recher. p. 24. La Noue, p. 134.
(116) La Noue, sixieme Disc. p. 133—146.

"began

" began our ſtudies at five; our great books under " our arms, our ink-ſtands and candleſticks in our " hands. We liſtened to all the lectures till ten " o'clock, without intermiſſion; and then dined, " after having in haſte run over for half an hour, " the ſubſtance of the lectures, which we had taken " down in writing. After dinner, as a matter of " amuſement, we read Sophocles, or Ariſtophanes, " or Euripides; and ſometimes, Demoſthenes, " Cicero, Virgil, and Horace. At one o'clock, to " our ſtudies again: at five, home, to repeat, and " look out in our books, for the paſſages cited, till " after ſix. Then we ſupped, and read in Greek, " or Latin. On holy-days, we went to high maſs " and veſpers: during the remainder of the day, a " little muſic and walking (117)." But, the ſtrictneſs of the ſcholaſtic and collegiate diſcipline had diſappeared, with many other of the characteriſtic virtues of the age of Francis the Firſt, after the commencement of the civil wars. Profligacy, corruption, and debauchery, infected the aſylums of learning, and rendered the youth indolent or diſſolute (118). Maſters, or preceptors of ability, became rare. Almoſt all thoſe who excelled in teaching bodily exerciſes, were procured from Italy (119). Numbers of young men of family, from theſe cauſes, were annually ſent into foreign countries, as affording ſuperior advantages and facilities of improvement. Between three and four hundred youths were ſuppoſed to quit France every year, to receive their education abroad; of whom more than half periſhed by diſeaſes, or in duels (120). The moſt celebrated ſeminary of the kingdom, was

Change under Henry the Third.

College of Navarre.

(117) Diſcours d'Henry de Meſmes, preſerved in Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 775.

(118) D'Aub. Memoires, p. 11 and 12. La Noue, cinq. Diſc. p. 119, and p. 122, and 125.

(119) La Noue, p. 129. (120) Ibid. p. 126.

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the college of Navarre at Paris, during the greater part of the ſixteenth century. Henry the Third, Henry the Fourth, the duke of Mayenne, his brother, the cardinal of Guiſe, and almoſt all the children of the higheſt quality, received the firſt rudiments of polite knowledge and letters, at that ſchool (121).

College of Guienne.

The youth of the ſouthern provinces were chiefly educated in the college of Guienne, at Bourdeaux, of which Montaigne ſpeaks as the moſt frequented, and beſt regulated in France. Goveanus, the principal, was a man of uncommon abilities and learning. He flouriſhed under Francis the Firſt, and his ſucceſſor. The tragedies of Buchanan, compoſed in Latin, and juſtly regarded as productions of taſte and genius, were frequently performed by the ſtudents. Montaigne tells us, that he had himſelf filled many characters. We may ſee in his beautiful and maſterly eſſay, "de l'Inſtitution des Enfans," addreſſed to Diana of Foix; the nature, genius, and mode, as well as all the characteriſtic vices and defects, of the ſyſtem of education in the ſixteenth century. There is not any eſſay of that amuſing and philoſophic writer, which conveys a higher idea of the enlargement of his mind, his knowledge of man, and his ſuperiority to the prejudices and errors of the age in which he lived (122).

Effect of the civil wars, on learning and the arts.

It may, however, be confidently aſſerted, that the civil wars, which deſolated the kingdom for above thirty years, were not more injurious to the morals and general felicity of the people, than to learning, and the progreſs of the arts. The corrupt manners of Catherine of Medicis; the perſecutions

(121) Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 129. Vie de Marg. de Val. p. 6 and 36.

(122) Eſſays de Montaigne, vol. i. p. 204—262, chap. xxv.

and

and maſſacres, cauſed by the antipathy of the two religions; and the ferocity produced by ſcenes of anarchy and bloodſhed; checked the growth of literature, debaſed the taſte of the nation, and plunged the country anew into barbariſm. From the æra of Henry the Second's death, in 1559, to the peace of Vervins, in 1589, France cannot be ſaid to have enjoyed any permanent tranquillity. During ſeveral years of that period, the monarchy itſelf ſeemed to be menaced with diſſolution. Far from wondering that ſcience was not more diffuſed, it may rather excite aſtoniſhment, that in a time ſo calamitous, we are yet preſented with many ſhining models of genius, in almoſt every branch of literature.

CHAP. V.

State of ſociety and manners.—Picture of the court, under Francis the Firſt.—Decline of its ſplendor, under the laſt princes of Valois.—Orders of knighthood.—Inſtitution of the order of the Holy Ghoſt.—Officers, and ceremonial of the court.—Palaces.—Caſtles of the nobility.—Dreſs.—Luxury of the table.—Furniture.—Carriages.—Litters.—Horſes.—Pages.—Lacqueys.—Buffoons.

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State of ſociety and manners.

AFTER having conſidered the French people under ſo many different aſpects, it is ſtill indiſpenſable, in order to complete the picture, that we take a ſurvey of the national manners. Man, in a ſtate of ſociety, is more forcibly diſtinguiſhed and characterized by the modes, uſages, and cuſtoms univerſally received, than by any civil or political regulations. To the former, his ſubmiſſion is voluntary: to the latter, it is conſtrained and compulſory. The features of the nation, during the period under our immediate review, were uncommonly bold and prominent. A long period of inteſtine diſſenſion, approaching to anarchy, had liberated the ſubject from all reſtraint; and let looſe thoſe deſtructive paſſions, which, under a well-ordered government, are repreſſed by the vigilance of the magiſtrate, and the terror of puniſhment. The royal authority was become contemptible; the laws were deſtitute of vigor; and the facility of committing crimes was equalled by their impunity. All the majeſty which ſurrounded the throne under Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second, had gradually

General diſſolution of manners.

dually diſappeared under the three ſucceeding princes; and while luxury diffuſed itſelf among the inferior orders, the ſplendor of the ſovereign diminiſhed. CHAP. V.

The French court, before the death of Louis the Twelfth, in 1515, was like the nation itſelf, rude and unpoliſhed. It was his ſucceſſor, the young count of Angouleme, become king by the title of Francis the Firſt, who introduced into it a magnificence, previouſly unknown in Europe. Ladies, releaſed from the dungeons or caſtles, in which their huſbands and fathers immured them from the world: prelates, liberated from the ſuperintendance of their dioceſes: men of letters, magiſtrates, and a vaſt train of nobility and gentry, crouded to pay their homage to a prince, who was ſo well able to appreciate, and to cheriſh or recompence, every ſpecies of merit (1). Manners may be ſaid to have gained as much by the change, as morals were perverted and corrupted. The king himſelf, while he protected letters, and revived the arts, gave a mortal wound to the chaſtity, fidelity, and virtue of the female ſex: his ſon, Henry the Second, imitated the example. But, thoſe monarchs, reſpected by their ſubjects, and undiſturbed, in a great meaſure, by civil commotions; maintained a becoming dignity even in their vices, and were careful to veil from popular inſpection, the pleaſures or debaucheries of the palace. Their ſucceſſors, inexperienced, oppreſſed by misfortunes, plundered of their revenues, compelled to purchaſe loyalty and obedience, or prodigal of their treaſures, were no longer able to ſuſtain the preceding pomp and grandeur of the crown. At the cloſe of Henry the Third's reign, ſcarcely any traces of the magnificence of his grandfather's court were to be diſcovered; and the uni-

Court of France, under Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second.

Change, under the laſt princes of Valois.

(1) Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 281.

verſal

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verſal diſorder of the times, levelled, in a conſiderable degree, the external diſtinction between the monarch and the ſubject.

We may judge how groſs were the manners of the fifteenth century, when we know, that the kings of France admitted in their train a certain number of women of pleaſure, who followed the court wherever it moved. Quarters were regularly aſſigned to them, and juſtice was adminiſtered by an officer, excluſively appointed to that employment (2).

Introduction of ladies.

Women of honor and quality were unknown about the perſons and reſidence of Charles the Seventh, and Louis the Eleventh. Anne of Bretagne began to aſſemble a ſelect band of ladies, whom ſhe retained near her, and whoſe conduct ſhe vigilantly ſuperintended: but, that aſſembly of perſons of both ſexes, held in the preſence of the ſovereign, and denominated in modern language, a drawing-room,

Magnificence.

originated with Francis the Firſt. Every ſpecies of luxury in dreſs, tables, and furniture, ſoon followed. It may excite ſome ſurprize to find, that on occaſion of marriages, Francis was accuſtomed to preſent dreſſes to the favorite ladies of his court, the materials of which were of the moſt coſtly kind (3). But, in no article was ſo much expence incurred, and ſuch magnificence diſplayed, as in the proviſion made for the royal houſehold. Not only the table of the ſovereign, but, thoſe of all the greater and leſſer officers of ſtate, who were extremely numerous, were ſerved with the utmoſt profuſion and delicacy. Nor was it confined to the reſidence of the court, when ſtationary in the capital. Wherever Francis moved, even in the midſt of woods, or in villages, the ſame plenty was viſible (4). The

Hoſpitality.

ſtrongeſt teſtimony to the ſplendid hoſpitality of

(2) Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 284 and 283.
(3) Ibid. p. 270. (4) Ibid. p. 271 and 272.

that

that monarch, was borne by the emperor Charles the Fifth himſelf, during his viſit, in 1539. Having heard from the duke of Alva, how well the conſtable Montmorenci's table was covered, he determined to ſatisfy himſelf of the truth of the report. Diſappearing, therefore, unexpectedly, at the hour of dinner, he placed himſelf uninvited, as a gueſt, at the conſtable's ſide. His amazement was extreme, at finding the fact exceed the account which he had received (5). CHAP. V.

Beſides the immediate officers of the houſehold, the court of Francis was crouded with cardinals, biſhops, and eccleſiaſtics, who expended the revenues of their ſees, or benefices, in regaling the more needy courtiers and gentlemen. Above twenty members of the ſacred college, were frequently reſident at the ſame time, in the metropolis; and even the Roman pontiffs themſelves could rarely boaſt of ſo numerous an aſſemblage (6). Scarcely any diminution of the magnificence, or hoſpitality of the French monarchs, was viſible before the acceſſion of Charles the Ninth. Henry the Second maintained his father's inſtitutions, and ſucceeded to his propenſities. Catherine of Medicis, in every period of life, emulated the praiſe of munificence, and rendered her palace the ſcene of feſtivity, gallantry, and pleaſure (7). But, the beginning of the civil wars was the term of its real duration; and, whatever efforts might be exerted on particular occaſions, the dilapidation of the finances affixed inſurmountable obſtacles to the ſupport of the antient ſtate and majeſty of the crown. Retrenchments of every kind were made in the royal expence; and, far from being in a condition to maintain the hoſpitality or ſplendor of Francis the Firſt, it was often found dif- Splendor of the court, under Francis the Firſt. Its decline, after the commencement of the civil wars.

(5) Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 273 and 274.
(6) Ibid. p. 286—288.
(7) Ibid. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 42—50.

ficult

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ficult under Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, to provide for the perſonal and moſt neceſſary expenditures of the king. Brantome draws a feeling picture of their diſtreſs, rendered, if poſſible, more poignant, by the compariſon with preceding times (8). It attained, like every other national misfortune, to its higheſt point, during the reign of the laſt prince of the houſe of Valois. The garriſon of Mentz, one of the moſt important frontier cities of the kingdom, was left for ſeveral months without pay, and was driven by neceſſity into a ſtate of mutiny and revolt (9). Such was the poverty of the court in November, 1574, only three months after Henry's return to France, that, on the journey from Lyons to Avignon, the greater number of the royal pages were neceſſitated to leave their cloaks behind, as pledges, in order to procure bread. No ſalaries, or appointments, continued to be paid; and, if one of the farmers, or treaſurers of the revenue, had not aided the queen-mother by a loan of about two hundred pounds, ſhe would have remained unaccompanied by a ſingle lady of any deſcription (10).

Poverty under Henry the Third.

It affords, at once, a curious proof of the poverty of the crown, and of the difficulty of raiſing ſupplies, to ſee, that only two years afterwards, it was ſeriouſly propoſed in council, by Catherine of Medicis, to apply to Muley Moluc, king of Fez, for a loan of money. If we did not know the fact from a perſon, who was preſent at its being agitated, and whoſe veracity is indiſputable, we might juſtly call it in queſtion. "On the 7th of February, 1577," ſays the duke of Nevers, in his Memoirs, "the "queen-mother propoſed to diſpatch the Abbé Gua- "dagni, to the king of Fez, to borrow two mil- "lions of gold." She likewiſe meant to authorize the envoy, to open a commercial treaty with Fez

(8) Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 275 and 276.
(9) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 249.
(10) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 47.

and

and Morocco, which, ſhe conceived, might prove very lucrative to the Moors, and to the French. It was hoped, that he might return with a favorable anſwer from the Mahometan prince, in two months. The treaſures of that monarch were eſtimated to exceed two millions and a half, ſterling. It is hard to ſay, by what arguments he could be induced to lend any part of it to Henry the Third. So wild and chimerical a propoſition does not ſeem to have been proſecuted or adopted (11). CHAP. V.

In the ſame year, we find that the king was unable to pay even his embaſſador at the court of Elizabeth, queen of England; or to continue the uſual ſtipends, which he was accuſtomed to allow to various perſons, from whom he received intelligence of the motions and deſigns of that princeſs (12). The army was in the ſame predicament; and Sancy, who, in 1589, raiſed a body of Switzers, was reduced, after mortgaging the moſt valuable diamonds of the crown, to pledge his own patrimonial eſtates and property, for their ſupport (13). Without the pecuniary aſſiſtance of Ferdinand, great duke of Tuſcany, and of the canton of Bern, the troops could neither have been ſubſiſted, nor induced to march into France. The guards themſelves were left unpaid; and the archers who protected the perſon of Henry at Blois, applied to the duke of Guiſe, on the morning of his aſſaſſination, imploring him to intereſt himſelf in their behalf, as they muſt otherwiſe be neceſſitated to ſell their horſes, and return to their reſpective houſes (14). Similar diſtreſs had manifeſted itſelf, in the houſehold and troops of the duke of Anjou. In 1582, the unfortunate Army, unpaid, and the guards.

(11) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 171.
(12) Letters 71 and 72, in Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 508—512 Lettres de Foix, p. 258.
(13) De Thou, vol. x. p. 647.
(14) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 106.

ſoldiers

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foldiers who had followed that prince's fortune into Flanders, were abandoned to ſuch penury, as to ſolicit alms for their ſubſiſtence (15).

Inſtitution of the order of the Holy Ghoſt.

In the midſt of theſe accumulated and humiliating extremities, Henry the Third, whoſe paſſion for expence and ceremonies could not be controlled by any reflexions on his ſituation, inſtituted the order of knighthood of the Holy Ghoſt. It was deſigned to replace that of St. Michael, created by Louis the Eleventh, and which had been proſtituted during the civil wars, in a manner that rendered it contemptible (16). The inſtitutions of chivalry may be ſaid to have expired, in a great meaſure, with Henry the Second. He was the laſt French monarch who received from the hands of a ſubject, the military honor of knighthood. Marſhal Biez conferred it on him; as the chevalier Bayard had done upon Francis the Firſt, before the battle of Marignan (17). We may judge how low the order of St. Michael was ſunk in the general eſtimation, by the terms in which it is mentioned by the Viſcount de Tavannes. "I have always diſdained it," ſays he, "and repeatedly declined to accept it. In my own "company, I have often had three knights of the "order; and in my father, marſhal Tavannes' "coffers, I found half a dozen blank patents, to be "given to whomſoever I ſhould pleaſe (18)." Many perſons, after having received it, laid it by, and concealed the honor. "Above a hundred gentlemen," ſays La Noue, "finding the expence and "ſtile of living inſeparable from the diſtinction, "not only inconvenient, but ruinous, have choſen "to lock up the inſignia of ſo pernicious a digni-"ty (19)." It was diſtributed to ſuch numbers, as

State of the order of St. Michael.

Its degradation.

(15) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 645.
(16) Ibid. vol. viii. p. 73.
(17) Brantome, Les Duels, p. 304.
(18) Tavannes, p. 179.
(19) La Noue, p. 169.

to

to be denominated in deriſion, "Le Collier à toutes "Bêtes (20)." CHAP. V.

Conſcious of this degradation, Henry the Third inſtituted the order of the Holy Ghoſt, on the laſt day of December, 1578. It was compoſed of only one hundred knights, at its commencement; and the king meant to have conferred on each of them four hundred crowns annual penſion, taken from the revenues of the richeſt abbeys of his dominions. But, as the Papal conſent was requiſite, in order to make ſo material an invaſion of the eccleſiaſtical property; as the clergy oppoſed it at Rome, the intention remained incomplete (21). Another object, propoſed by its founder, was to attach the members of the new order, more ſtrictly to himſelf; and to form, by its means, a counterpoiſe to the ſtrength of the adherents of the League. But, he ſoon diſcovered how frail was the obligation of oaths, when counteracted by ambition. The order of the Holy Ghoſt was not long confined to the original number of a hundred. It was conferred indiſcriminately, and incurred the ſame reproaches and contempt, which had been laviſhed on that of St. Michael (22). Motives for the creation of the order of the Holy Ghoſt. Its proſtitution.

A ſimilar increaſe and proſtitution of all the dignities or honors of the crown, characteriſed the reign of Henry the Third. Gentlemen of the bed-chamber, eſquires, and colonels, were augmented in a proportion with the other attendants of the court (23). "Monſieur d'Eſſe," ſays Brantome, "was made for his ſervices in defending Landrecy "againſt the emperor, a gentleman of the bed-"chamber to Henry the Second, which was then a "great and honorable employment. They ſerved Multiplication of offices and dignities.

(20) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 103. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 356.
(21) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 73 and 74. Tavannes, ibid.
(22) Brant. Les Duels, p. 290.
(23) La Noue, p. 169.

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"only six months, and received twelve hundred "livres, or about fifty pounds, of salary (24)." Under his sons, the title was multiplied, and the appointments were withheld.

Household of the duke of Anjou.

The establishment of the duke of Anjou's household, in 1576, of which a most accurate account is preserved in the duke of Nevers' Memoirs, seems to have been more splendid and expensive, if the comparative value of money be considered, than that of any prince of the family of Bourbon, before the late revolution of 1789. The aggregate amount of the appointments to all the officers and attendants, is no less than two hundred and sixty-three thousand, seven hundred and ten livres, annually (25). It is difficult to estimate the relative value of that sum, at the distance of more than two centuries, in English money; but, perhaps, we shall not rate it too high, when we suppose that it was, in fact, equal to ninety thousand pounds sterling, at this time. It is extremely curious, and conveys a high idea of the magnificence of princes in that age, to survey the number of offices, and salaries respectively annexed to each. Much of the genius and temper of the times, may be traced or discovered in them. The duke had no less than one hundred and six chamberlains, at six hundred livres, or about twenty-five pounds each; besides one hundred and forty-eight gentlemen of the bed-chamber, whose salaries varied, from two hundred, to five hundred livres. There are fifteen almoners, seven chaplains, as many clerks of the chapel, and one preacher. Their appointments, in general, do not exceed two, to three hundred livres; and some are as a hundred sous, or fifty pence. To the office of superintendant of the household, four thousand livres, or, near a

(24) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 180.
(25) About eleven thousand pounds.

hundred

hundred and eighty pounds, are annexed. The duke has ſixteen phyſicians, whoſe ſalaries gradually diminiſh, from ſix hundred, down to ten livres. The ſurgeons are eleven in number, and their appointments are exactly ſimilar, being, each, a hundred and eighty livres. There is only one apothecary, with four hundred livres ſalary. He has forty-ſix valets de chambre, and forty-one valets of the wardrobe, whoſe ſalaries are, in general, about two hundred livres. The firſt valet has eight hundred. It is amuſing to ſee, that he has five barbers, who receive the ſame pay as the ſurgeons, except the firſt, who is termed barber in ordinary, and has three hundred livres. Paré, in all his writings, ſeems to conſider the phyſicians, ſurgeons, and barbers, as exerciſing different branches of the ſame profeſſion of healing. He couples them together, and regards them as diſciples, or followers of one common maſter, Eſculapius (25). There are among the inferior officers, four tapeſtry hangers, and two helpers: clockmakers, embroiderers, and mercers. The council is very numerous; but, the office ſeems to have been little more than honorary and titular: the emolument is ſmall. To the chancellor, four thouſand livres. There are one hundred and eleven ſecretaries; and the laſt name in the liſt, is the duke's nurſe, with a ſalary of about eighteen pounds (26).

However ſplendid this eſtabliſhment appears on paper, it was far otherwiſe in reality. The duke, in his laſt will, dated the 8th of June, 1584, at Chateau Thierry in Champagne, owns with concern and expreſſions of the deepeſt diſtreſs, that the greater part of his officers and ſervants were unpaid. He pathetically and earneſtly recommends them to

(25) Œuvres de Paré, p. 568.
(26) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 577—599.

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the king, his brother's pity, or bounty; and declares, that he is, besides, indebted to various individuals, not less than one hundred and fifty thousand crowns (27).

Creation of a colonel-general of the infantry.

A creation which excited universal clamour, and which exposed to general censure, the unbounded partiality of Henry the Third towards Epernon, was the office of colonel-general of France. Henry, unable to induce the duke of Guise to lay down or to sell, on any conditions, his post of lord-steward of the household, erected a new charge for his favorite. The employment of colonel-general of the infantry, was declared to be henceforward an office, not of the king, but, of the crown of France. Prerogatives, little short of royal, were annexed to it: the power of filling up, and of naming to all vacant commissions in the infantry, without reserve, was added to the right of judging definitively, all causes which respected the life or honor of the troops, before a tribunal, composed of his own officers, in which he presided (28). It may be justly questioned, whether powers so vast were ever entrusted to any subject; and they degraded the sovereign who conferred them, in the same proportion that they elevated the object of his favor. In 1586, the post of grand-master of the ceremonies, unknown before that period, was instituted by the same prince (29). About two years earlier, he had the weakness, in consequence of a conversation which he had with the English embassadress at Paris, to issue a regulation respecting the ceremonial of the court. The forms, observed in approaching, and serving Elizabeth, queen of England, and her predecessors, in the sixteenth century, were more

Ceremonial of the court.

(27) Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 601—603.
(28) Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 100—102. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 202.
(29) L'Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 659.

pompous

pompous and befitting an arbitrary monarch, than thoſe uſed in France. Henry, anxious to imitate, or exceed the Engliſh princeſs, in exacting marks of ſubmiſſion from his courtiers and miniſters, publiſhed an injunction, ſpecifying in the moſt minute detail, the hours, dreſs, and formalities, indiſpenſable for all who wiſhed to obtain audience, or to tranſact buſineſs (30). They were received with diſdain, by the nation; and only ſerved to render more contemptible a ſovereign, who, while he was occupied with empty ceremonies, had ſquandered the revenues, diminiſhed the power, and degraded the majeſty of the throne. At the cloſe of the reign of Francis the Firſt, there were no peers in the kingdom, except the princes of the royal blood, and the collateral deſcendants of ſome ſovereign houſes, who were ſettled in France. The titles of duke, count, and marquis, were the only ſimple gradations and ranks of nobility. The firſt ſubject ever raiſed to the peerage, was the conſtable Montmorenci, by Henry the Second. Under Charles the Ninth, it became more common; and his brother, when he elevated to that dignity, his two minions, Joyeuſe and Epernon, gave them precedence above every other gentleman, though of prior creation (31).

Creation of peers.

With Francis the Firſt, magnificence and convenience in the ſtyle of conſtructing houſes of every deſcription, began to be known among the French. The caſtles of Pleſſiz les Tours, Amboiſe, and Blois, in which reſided principally his immediate predeceſſors, were inſulated, and almoſt inacceſſible faſtneſſes, overhanging the Loire, and more calculated for defence againſt enemies, than becoming the majeſty of a great monarch. Chambord and Fontainbleau were the firſt palaces, properly ſo denominated,

Conſtruction, and mode of building.

Improvements, introduced by Francis the Firſt.

(30) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 202 and 203.

(31) Memoire au Depôt de Bethune, cited in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 94.

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minated, that Europe had beheld beyond the Alps since the deſtruction of the Roman empire (32). Neither ſtrength, nor ſafety, conſtituted their characteriſtic: they retained, indeed, the moat, and the caſtellated appearance, more in compliance with the eſtabliſhed mode, than from any other cauſe. Pavillions, groves, ſtatues, and all the ornaments of a ſoftened and cultivated taſte, were to be found in the reſidence of Francis. The example ſpread with rapidity, among the nobility. Ecouen, and Chantilly, conſtructed by the conſtable Montmorenci, were palaces of pleaſure, and not fortreſſes, though they ſtill preſented a frowning, and embattled mien. The antient dungeons and turrets, in which the gentlemen and barons had immured themſelves for ſo many ages, began to be re edified on the principles of a more ſplendid, or convenient architecture (33).

Elegance of palaces.

We may judge, from the deſcription of Meudon, and of St. Maur des Foſſés, (the villas of the cardinals of Lorrain, and of du Bellai,) which are to be found in the epiſtles of l'Hopital, how great a progreſs the art of embelliſhing a ſeat, had already made, before 1559. Plantations, grottos, terraces, and gardens, adorned with antique buſts and ſtatues from Rome, were to be found in the voluptuous retreats of thoſe prelates (34). It is not, however, by any means, to be underſtood, that the nobility in general, reſembled them; or that the caſtles, in the moſt literal acceptation of the term, ceaſed to be maintained and inhabited by the gentry. For a long time ſubſequent to the period under our examination, the draw-bridges were regularly raiſed every evening, and only lowered in the morning, to receive the neceſſary ſupplies of proviſions, brought by the peaſants for ſale. It was requiſite to beſiege a

Caſtles of the nobility.

(32) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 277—279.
(33) La Noue, p. 164—167.
(34) Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. i. p. 17—19, and 83—85.

refractory,

refractory, or rebellious gentleman, who from the battlements of his caſtle, bid defiance to the ſovereign himſelf, and often maintained an obſtinate conflict againſt the forces of the crown (35). Henry the Third was ſo convinced of the magnitude of the evil, and ſo deſirous of ſtopping, or controlling its further progreſs, that, in 1579, he expreſsly enjoined the commiſſioners, who were ſent to enquire into abuſes, throughout the provinces, to render it an object of their peculiar attention. "You will make diligent ſearch," ſays he, "after thoſe "who have fortified, or may "hereafter fortify, "their houſes with ditches, towers, baſtions, or other "works, without having obtained our permiſſion, or, "that of our predeceſſors (36)." How numerous were theſe caſtles, and embattled, or caſtellated houſes, we may judge, when we find, that in 1588, the duke of Nevers, who commanded the royal forces, made himſelf maſter of thirty-ſix, only in Lower Poitou, and within the ſpace of a few weeks (37). They were the receptacles and aſylums of petty deſpots, who inſulted the crown, and who plundered the miſerable peaſants of the neighbouring country.

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Dreſs.

Dreſs is, perhaps, the ſtrongeſt and moſt intereſting feature, by which national manners are characteriſed. It was carried, like every other article of expence or taſte, to a pitch of almoſt unlimited extravagance, under Henry the Third. The rapidity and fluctuation of faſhion, kept pace with the coſtlineſs of the materials. Such was the general demand for gold and ſilver ſtuffs, or brocades, that the effect was ſenſibly felt, by the diminution of the quantity of ſpecie throughout the kingdom (38). In 1571, at the entertainment of Nogent, in honor of the

Splendor of it.

(35) Le Lab. ſur. Caſt. vol. ii. p. 601.
(36) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 607.
(37) Ibid. p. 875 and 877.
(38) L'Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 659.

ducheſs

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ducheſs of Bouillon, the king, Charles the Ninth, his two brothers, and the duke of Lorrain, were all dreſſed in the ſame manner. Their habits were of ſilver ſtuff, with an embroidery of pearls, and edged with gold (39). "Formerly," ſays la Noue, "it was "uſual to wear the ſame dreſs, for a conſiderable "time; but, at preſent, we may pronounce, that, "among the courtiers, their ordinary duration does "not exceed three months, for a common ſuit; for "a more expenſive one, ſix months: and among "the other nobility, ſomewhat longer (40)."

Rapidity of faſhion.

"Such has been the depravity of the age," adds he in another place, "that our pages and lacqueys have "been habited in ſilver ſtuffs (41)." All diſtinctive marks, by which the different orders of ſociety might be diſtinguiſhed, ſeem, in a great meaſure, to have been broken down under Henry the Third. "A cobler," ſays la Noue, "who has followed "arms for a couple of years, will wear a gilt ſword, "which our anceſtors would ſcruple to have "done, unleſs they had received the honor of "knighthood: he will put on ſilk ſtockings; a "piece of elegance which Henry the Second never "knew during his whole life (42)." It is hardly poſſible to mark the progreſs of luxury, in more expreſſive terms. At the nuptials of Joyeuſe, in 1581, when the feſtivities and entertainments laſted ſeventeen days, and at which the dreſſes were expenſive and ſpendid beyond deſcription; all the noblemen and ladies who were invited, changed their dreſs every day, by the king's expreſs command (43).

Progreſs of luxury.

The hat, and turban.

The hat, decorated with feathers, and precious ſtones, worn by Francis the Firſt, was converted into

(39) Manuſc. de Bethune, in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 81.
(40) La Noue, p. 163. (41) Ibid. p. 162. (42) Ibid. p. 194.
(43) L'Etoile, p. 45.

a bonnet,

a bonnet, or cap, by Henry the Second, and his two ſucceſſors. Henry the Third ſubſtituted in its place, the Italian "toque," or turban; not only as a more effeminate ornament, but, in the view of more effectually concealing his want of hair (44). It was compoſed of velvet, adorned with jewels, and faſtened or bound over one ear, leaving the other expoſed, in which was hung a pearl, or diamond (45). When Sully was ſent by the king of Navarre, in 1587, to treat with that infatuated and diſſolute prince, he was preſented by Villeroy to him, at St. Maur, near Paris. "I found him," ſays Sully, "in his cloſet, a ſword by his ſide, a ſhort "cloak on his ſhoulders, his little turban on his "head; and about his neck, in form of a ſcarf, "was hung a baſket, ſuch as the venders of cheeſe "uſe, in which there were two or three little "dogs, not larger than my fiſt (46)." It may be curious to oppoſe to this portrait of Henry the Third, the deſcription left us by a writer of equal veracity, of the king of Navarre, as he appeared at the memorable interview of Pleſſiz les Tours, in April, 1589. It ſtands ſingularly contraſted with the preceding picture. "He paſſed the river Loire," ſays Cayet, "at the head of his guards. Of the whole "troop, not one, except himſelf, had either a cloak, "or a plume. All wore white ſcarfs. The king "was clothed like a ſoldier; his doublet, worn "away over the ſhoulders, and on the ſides, with "the perpetual uſe of a cuiraſs. His looſe breeches "were of fillamot velvet; his cloak, ſcarlet. He "had on a grey hat, ornamented with a large white "plume, and a very handſome medal (47)."

Dreſs of Henry the Third, and of the king of Navarre.

(44) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 272.
(45) L'Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 659.
(46) Sully, vol. i. p. 48.
(47) Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 185.

During

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Ruffs. During the reigns of Francis the Second and Charles the Ninth, ruffs, curiouſly plaited, were univerſally faſhionable. Every gentleman wore them; and the men of dreſs took great pains, and paſſed much time, in adjuſting them with elegance. "After the action near Perigueux, in 1568, where "the Hugonots were defeated," ſays Brantome, "the body of their leader, Pierregourde, was diſ-"covered: he had on a clean white ſhirt; but, "above all, a very handſome ruff, moſt delicately "crimped and plaited, as they were then worn (48)." Soon after the acceſſion, in 1575, Henry the Third quitted the mode, of which he had previouſly been extravagantly fond; and adopted the little Italian

Bands. bands, or collars, turned down on the neck (49).

Ear-rings. How general was the uſe of ear-rings among the men, we may collect from d'Aubigné; who ſays, that when the Hugonots, in 1568, made a collection for paying the German auxiliary army, the pages and lacqueys tore their pendants out of their ears, in their anxiety to contribute towards the general ſupply (50). Henry the Third uſually wore ear-rings; and among the many marks of indecent and unmanly fondneſs, with which he bewailed the death of Quelus, one of his minions, killed in a duel; he took out of that favourite's ears, the pendants, which he had previouſly fixed in them with his own hands (51).

Gold chains. Gold chains were rather an honorary mark of diſtinction, than an ordinary appendage of dreſs. Sovereigns, and great perſonages, often conferred them for eminent ſervices, or preſented them to embaſſadors and foreign miniſters. It was accounted

(48) Brant. vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 194.
(49) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt de Fra. p. 59,
(50) D'Aub. Hiſt. Gen. vol. i. p. 228.
(51) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 92. Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 171,

a diſplay

a display of magnificence in the famous constable of Bourbon, which excited the envy of Francis the First; that, at the ceremony of his son's baptism, to which the king was invited, he had five hundred gentlemen, his retainers, present, every one of whom wore a triple chain of gold round his neck (52). The Swiss deputies, twenty-six in number, who came to Paris in 1583, to renew the treaty with the crown of France, received from Henry the Third, before their departure, each a gold collar, valued at two hundred and fifty crowns (53). In 1568, Louis, prince of Condé, charmed with the valor of Schomberg, who had attacked and dislodged some of the Italian soldiery in the service of Charles the Ninth; and unable otherwise to express his sense of the courage displayed in the enterprize, put round the neck of Schomberg, at the head of the army, a gold chain worth a hundred crowns (54). That so honorable a testimony of merit, or mark of eminence, was sometimes prostituted and degraded by conferring it on improper subjects, is evident. We find Henry the Second, at the peace of Cateau, in 1559, presenting to the buffoon of Philip the Second, a chain of gold of considerable value (55).

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Honorary marks.

In a court so voluptuous, as that of Catherine of Medicis, where pleasure was usually rendered the veil or vehicle of policy, it may be naturally supposed, that all the arts of luxury and elegance had made a progress not less universal, among the female sex, than in the other. Marriage portions, before the extinction of the family of Valois, were already increased, among the opulent part of the inhabitants of Paris, to such a point, that a young woman was

Arts of luxury.

(52) Brant. vol. i. Cap. Etran. p. 245.
(53) Busbeq. letter 12, p. 74.
(54) D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. i. p. 228 and 229.
(55) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 293.

not

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not eſteemed an object of intereſted attention, unleſs ſhe poſſeſſed at leaſt from four to five hundred pounds ſterling in ready money, and full twenty pounds of annual rent. This fact would appear incredible, or, at leaſt, exaggerated, if it was not aſſerted as notorious and incontrovertible, by a contemporary author of credit (56). We may trace in Brantome, who had paſſed his life in the court of the three laſt princes of Valois, the gradual refinement, expence, and profuſion of ornament, by which the ladies were diſtinguiſhed. Margaret, queen of Navarre, a princeſs eminent for the beauty of her perſon, as much as for the depravity and libertiniſm of her manners, influenced greatly, by her example, the dreſs and modes of the period.

Female ornaments.

We find her attired or decorated with almoſt all the attributes and accompaniments of modern coquetry. Falſe hair, maſks, paint, both red and white; fans, black velvet ſhoes, white ſlippers pointed at the toe, hair powder, feathers, crape, white ſilk ſtockings, ear-rings, pearls, tooth powder, and a variety of ſubſervient articles, compoſing her toilet, leave us no room to doubt the magnificence of her appearance (57). Many of theſe had been recently introduced into France, from Venice and other cities of

Modes.

Italy. As early as 1574, we find the earl of Leiceſter, who well knew all the foibles and weakneſſes of his royal miſtreſs, diſpatching a gentleman of his houſehold to Paris, to bring over falſe hair and edgings of the neweſt faſhion, for Elizabeth (58). That

(56) Satyre Menip. vol. iii. p. 198, 199.

(57) Œuvres de St. Gelais, p. 108. Brant. vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 380—589, and 396—399; and vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 131 and 159. Vie de Marg. de Val. p. 236, 243, and 284. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 407. Œuvres de Ronſard, tom. viii. liv. i. p. 10, 11. Œuvres de Parç, p. 739—741.

(58) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 407.

capital

capital began already to be regarded as the arbitreſs of taſte and mode. CHAP. V.

Maſks became univerſal among the ladies of every rank, under the reign of Charles the Ninth: they were particularly worn in travelling, in order to prevent the injuries of the air and ſun (59). Margaret of Valois, on her two journeys to Spa, and to Nerac, performed in 1577, and 1583, is conſtantly maſqued (60). When Henry, duke of Guiſe, arrived at Paris in 1588, a young lady, ſeated in a ſhop, in one of the principal ſtreets through which he paſſed, attended by crowds of people, lowering her maſque, ſaid to him, "Good prince, ſince thou art here, we "are all ſaved (61)." Sattin was principally uſed in the dreſſes of perſons of quality of both ſexes; or, ſtill more frequently, velvet. Charles the Ninth, his brothers, and the king of Navarre, were all habited, at the nuptials of Margaret of Valois, in 1572, in uniforms of pale yellow ſattin, covered with embroidery in relief, enriched with pearls and precious ſtones (62). The enormous expence of female dreſſes in that age, may be gueſſed at, when the queen of Navarre informs us, that ſhe preſented the counteſs of Lalain, at Mons in Hainault, with one of her gowns. "It was," ſays ſhe, "of black "ſattin, covered with embroidery; which had coſt "from four to five hundred crowns (63)." A ſum, almoſt incredible, if we conſider the relative value of money; and much exceeding the moſt coſtly gown, worn by queens, or princeſſes, in the preſent time.

Maſks.

Sattins.

The petticoat was made very long, ſo as to conceal the feet entirely in walking; but, as a ſort of com-

Female dreſs.

(59) Vie de Margue: de Val. p. 236 and 343.
(60) Mem. de Margue: p. 44 and 129.
(61) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 244.
(62) Vie de Marg. p. 85.
(63) Vie de Marg. p. 244. Mem. de Marg. p. 136.

penſation

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penſation of this mark of modeſty and baſhfulneſs, the ladies diſplayed their necks in an immoderate degree. To Margaret of Valois, was, likewiſe, due the introduction of the mode; and ſhe continued to expoſe that part of her perſon, at a period of life when it was no longer calculated to excite admiration, in defiance of the admonitions and reprehenſions, levelled at her from the pulpit (64). It excites entertainment, to know, that inventions for increaſing the ſize of the female figure behind, as well as for augmenting it before; and both of which have been renewed in the preſent age; were common under the laſt princes of Valois. As early as 1563, treatiſes were written, and ſatires compoſed, on the "Baſ-"quines," and "Vertugalles;" the two articles of dreſs, deſtined to the above-mentioned purpoſes. They were, not without reaſon, conſidered as being ſubſervient to, and productive of greater depravity of manners; particularly, from the concealment which they afforded to pregnancy. In 1579, under Henry the Third, the uſe of them was ſo general, that they were commonly called by the name of the part, which they covered, or protected. Ladies, before they went out, were accuſtomed, ſays a contemporary writer, to call to their maid-ſervant, "Apportez "moi mon cul (65)."

Pattins.

With a view to increaſe their height, ſhort women uſed a ſort of pattins, compoſed of cork, and which, if we may judge by Brantome's account, were equally cumbrous and deſtitute of grace. However extraordinary it appears, he repeatedly aſſerts, that theſe pattins raiſed the perſon who wore them, near twelve inches from the ground (66). We feel no little ſurprize, and ſome degree of ridicule, at reading in

(64) Vie de Marg. p. 401.

(65) Biblioth. Exotica, p. 207. H. Etienne, Dialogues, p. 202, 203. Satyre Menip. vol. ii. p. 387, 388.

(66) Brant. vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 381, and 396—399.

ſo

ſo grave an author as Ambroſe Paré, at leaſt twenty different receipts, or preſcriptions, for making white paint, and rouge. The title of the chapter, in which he diſcloſes, and details the modes of painting the female face, without injury to the health, is denominated, "Des Fards, pour decorer et embellir la Face des Femmes (67)." He divides them into diſtinct ſpecies, applicable to various purpoſes; and the fineſt lady of the preſent age, might, probably, find ſome valuable hints, or make ſome important acceſſion to her knowledge on this delicate ſubject, by conſulting Paré, who wrote more than two centuries ago.

Mourning began already to be rendered ſuſceptible of ornament and elegance, under Henry the Third. Widows never appeared in any dreſs, except white or black. Their petticoats and ſtockings were ſcrupulouſly confined to grey, violet, and blue. Precious ſtones were only worn by them on their fingers, and on their girdles; but they might, without violation of propriety, ſubſtitute pearls on the neck and arms (68). Females of diſtinction were accuſtomed to wear pendants in their ears, made in the ſhape of human ſkulls. We find a ſonnet of Deſportes, addreſſed to Mademoiſelle de Chateauneuf, the celebrated miſtreſs of Henry the Third, on her appearing with theſe funereal ornaments (69). Small ebony, or ivory ſkulls, ſtrung as a chaplet, and hanging at their waiſts, were likewiſe commonly worn by ladies, not only, as it ſeems, for the loſs of their huſbands, but for the death of their lovers (70). The mourning of the kings of France, was always violet. In 1584, contrary to

Mourning.

Royal mourning.

(67) Œuvres de Paré, p. 739.
(68) Brant. vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 131 and 132.
(69) Œuvres de Deſportes, p. 430.
(70) Brant. vol. i. p. 148.

received

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received cuſtom, Henry the Third put on black, to expreſs his concern for the deceaſe of his brother, the duke of Anjou (71): but, he only appeared in violet, when he accompanied the funeral proceſſion of his mother, Catherine, four years afterwards (72). It is a circumſtance not unworthy of attention, as it characterizes the age, that green was regarded as the colour for mourning for fools or lunatics. No ſooner was the intelligence of Henry the Third's death, in conſequence of the wound which he had received from Clement, divulged at Paris, on the ſecond of Auguſt, 1589, than the people univerſally put on green, in deriſion. The ducheſs of Montpenſier diſtributed ſcarfs of the ſame colour, to all the principal adherents of the League (73).

Funerals.

Funerals were commonly ſolemnized with great magnificence. We find Elizabeth, queen of England, though a Proteſtant, performing a ſervice for Charles the Ninth, with the utmoſt pomp, in the cathedral of St. Paul, at London, in 1574. All the great nobility attended: the banner of France was diſplayed, and the biſhop of Hereford made the funeral oration. It is to be preſumed, that he took care to omit any mention of the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew (74).

Luxury of the table.

The luxury of the table kept pace with the elegance of dreſs, if it did not even exceed it, during the period before us; and it is highly probable, that the cookery of France was much more delicate than that of England, and the northern nations. We find mention made in Brantome, of many culinary articles, as common, which were certainly unknown among the Engliſh, under Elizabeth. The moſt exquiſite ſauces, meats, and vegetables, ſeem to

(71) Buſbequius, letter 38, p. 203.
(72) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 124.
(73) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 287.
(74) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 66 and 67.

have

have been ſerved at the tables of the great, in the utmoſt profuſion. Sallads, artichokes, aſparagus, morelles, truffles, and many other delicacies, continually occur (75). The chancellor, l'Hopital, when enumerating the productions of his farm and garden, at Vignai near Eſtampes, includes among them, beans, peas, and turnips (76). Orange trees had been brought from the Levant, and were ſucceſsfully cultivated by the conſtable of Bourbon, in his gardens at Moulins, before 1524 (77). The entertainments, and the deſerts, given by the "vidame" of Chartres, to Edward the Sixth, and his court, when he was ſent over as embaſſador from Henry the Second, in 1551, were far more ſplendid and coſtly, than had ever been ſeen before in London (78). On the 26th of January, 1580, cardinal Birague received Henry the Third, his queen and mother, attended by a great train of noblemen and ladies, in the gallery of his houſe at Paris. A collation was there ſerved, upon two long tables, conſiſting of between eleven and twelve hundred diſhes, compoſed of confectionary, and dried ſweetmeats of various kinds, conſtructed in the form of caſtles, pyramids, and other elegant figures (79). The original eſtimate of the ſum, requiſite for maintaining the table of the duke of Anjou, as commander in chief of the royal forces before Rochelle, in 1573, was above two thouſand pounds a-month. Marſhal Tavannes reduced it to about four hundred (80). Even the latter allowance muſt be conſidered as very ample. Ronſard, enumerating the fruits common at the tables of the

Vegetables.

Banquets.

(75) Brant. vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 268—270.
(76) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. Epitres, p. 109.
(77) Ibid. vol. ii. p. 282.
(78) Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 341.
(79) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 112.
(80) Tavannes, p. 448.

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opulent, ſpeaks of peaches, mulberries, apricots, pears, quinces, raſberries, cherries, and ſtrawberries (81). Few of theſe delicacies were known, or produced among the Engliſh, before the reign of James the Firſt: a period later by near half a century.

Style and expence of tables.

We may ſee in Buſbequius, the conſumption of Don Antonio, titular king of Portugal, when reſiding at Rüel, not far from Paris, in 1583. "He conſumes," ſays that author, "every day, the fourth "part of an ox, two ſheep, and a hundred and "fifty loaves." It is to be obſerved, that Antonio was then ſinking faſt into poverty and oblivion (82). The Swiſs embaſſadors, who came to ratify the treaty between the Helvetic Union and Henry the Third, received daily, from the corporation of Paris, thirteen Mentz ham paſties, thirty quarts of red and white wine, and forty wax torches (83).

Hours.

The uſual hour of ſitting down to dinner was eleven o'clock, under Charles the Ninth. Catherine of Medicis, in a long letter which ſhe addreſſed to that prince in 1563, and which forcibly diſplays the enlargement of her mind, as well as her knowledge of the arts of reigning; ſtrongly exhorts her ſon never to dine at a later hour (84). It is a circumſtance worthy of remark, that Francis Montmorenci, eldeſt ſon of the conſtable, when taken priſoner, and confined at Liſle, in 1557, writes to his father, to inform him, that "his daily expences amounted to three half "crowns a-day, as every article of life coſt at leaſt "double the price paid for them in France (85)."

Simplicity of l'Hopital.

The chancellor l'Hopital alone, appears to have adhered to the primitive ſimplicity of earlier times, in the article of his table. Brantome, who had dined

(81) Œuvres de Ronſard, tom. iii. p. 58.
(82) Buſbeq. letter 20, p. 122.
(83) L'Etoile, p. 61.
(84) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 451.
(85) Depôt de Bethune, N° 8673, cited in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 106.

with

with him, expreſsly ſays, that only boiled meat was ſerved at it, according to his regular cuſtom (86). That great magiſtrate, who emulated the poetic fame of Horace, equally imitated the frugality of the Roman poet. It was always cuſtomary to preſent water to the gueſts, to waſh their hands, before they ſat down to table, and again at their riſing (87). CHAP. V.

Magnificence in furniture may be ſaid to have been totally unknown among the French, before the reign of Henry the Second. Marſhal St. André, a voluptuous and diſſolute nobleman, who acquired an immenſe property from the favor of that monarch, gave the firſt example of rich furniture, at his caſtle of Valeri. It was ſaid to exceed in beauty, any thing to be found in the royal palaces. Perſian carpets, wrought with gold; and tapeſtries of exquiſite workmanſhip, were among the ornamental pieces. He was juſtly denominated the Lucullus of France (88). Francis the Firſt poſſeſſed two ſuits of tapeſtry, regarded as the moſt ſuperb in Europe. Both were of Flemiſh manufacture. One repreſented "the continence of Scipio," and was, on great feſtivals, uſed for decorating the principal halls of his palace. "It coſt," adds Brantome, "eleven "thouſand crowns, at that time: at preſent, I have "been aſſured, it could not be procured for twenty-"five thouſand, it being entirely compoſed of gold "and ſilk (89)." The ſecond ſuit was, likewiſe, hiſtorical; but, the ſubject was taken from Scripture, and it was appropriated to the royal chapel. As a proof how much more univerſally commerce had diffuſed wealth and all the arts of luxury, among the Italians of the ſame period; Brantome owns, that in the houſe of a private banker at Genoa, he

Furniture.

Tapeſtries.

Their ſplendor and value.

(86) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 80.
(87) Ibid. p. 183. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 503.
(88) Ibid. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 307. La Noue, p. 168.
(89) Ibid. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 271.

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had ſeen a tapeſtry hanging, repreſenting the exploits of Achilles before Troy, ſcarcely inferior in any reſpect to thoſe of Francis. It was valued, by the owner, at fifteen thouſand crowns (90).

Margaret of Valois, in her Memoirs, deſcribes the tapeſtries and the furniture, with which Don John of Auſtria fitted up the apartments, occupied by her at Namur, as infinitely more coſtly than any that ſhe had ever beheld in France. The tapeſtry was compoſed of velvet, or ſattin, ornamented with columns, woven in embroidery of gold and ſilver. A Baſhaw, whoſe ſons Don John had made priſoners at the victory of Lepanto, and whom he had reſtored without ranſom, preſented him with the materials. He cauſed them to be made up at Milan, in which city were found the moſt expert workmen of Europe, in that branch of luxury (91).

Commonly removed from one palace to another.

It was common to remove the principal tapeſtries of the crown wherever the ſovereign went, and to hang them on the walls of the chief apartments. At the preciſe moment of time when the duke of Guiſe was aſſaſſinated at Blois, a workman was occupied in unhooking and taking down the hangings of the room, in order to tranſport them to Clery, near Orleans, to which place the king was about to transfer his reſidence. A piece of the tapeſtry was, by Henry's command, laid over the dead body (92). We may judge of the value and ſplendor of the hangings uſed on great occaſions, in the palaces of noblemen of high rank, by the deſcription of that which was put up in the hall of the conſtable Montmorenci's houſe at Paris, when he lay in ſtate after his deceaſe, in 1567. It was crimſon velvet, bordered with pearls, mixed with embroidery of gold thread. The floor was covered

Hangings.

(90) Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 271 and 272.
(91) Memoires de Marg. p. 112, 113.
(92) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 109.

with

with Turkey carpets; and in the middle was raiſed a bed of ſtate, over which was ſpread a quilt of thirty yards ſquare, compoſed of cloth of gold, edged with ermine, and ſurmounted with a canopy of the ſame coſtly materials. The benches, pillows, and cuſhions, were covered with gold tiſſue or brocade (93). That great luxury in furniſhing the caſtles of prelates and biſhops, had diſplayed itſelf, even in provinces very remote from the capital, before the cloſe of Henry the Second's reign, may be clearly inferred from the terms in which l'Hopital mentions the reception and entertainment given to Margaret, ducheſs of Savoy, in 1559, at Rouſillon, in Dauphiné. The manſion belonged to the cardinal of Tournon, who was abſent at Rome; but, the honors were performed by his brother. "Our tables," ſays he, "were ſplendidly ſerved; "and delicious wines were poured into vaſes of "gold and ſilver. Nothing could equal the beauty "of the linen, the furniture, and the number of "rich carpets from Sidon and the coaſt of Aſia "Minor (94)."

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Luxury, in the caſtles of the great eccleſiaſtics.

It is curious to ſee, that, with all their magnificence, the nobility of France in that age, were by no means poſſeſſed of the virtue of cleanlineſs in their dwellings. La Noue ſeverely reproaches them with this characteriſtic defect. "No ſooner," ſays he, "has a gentleman conſtructed a houſe, than he "muſt, of neceſſity, furniſh it with tapeſtries "from Flanders, and beds from Milan."—"But, "when we ſee how neatly, and at how ſmall an "expence, the houſes of ſimple citizens and mer-"chants are fitted up, the nobles ought to be "aſhamed to keep their rooms ſo filthy (95)."

Want of cleanlineſs.

(93) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 502 and 503.
(94) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Epitres, p. 288.
(95) La Noue, p. 167 and 168.

Plate

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Plate.

Plate began to be common among the higher orders of ſociety. At the departure of the Engliſh embaſſador from Paris, in 1585, who had brought to Henry the Third the order of the garter; the plate, preſented to him by the king, was eſtimated at five hundred pounds value (96). One hundred crowns a day had been allowed him during his reſidence in the metropolis, for the ſupport of his houſehold. His ſtay did not exceed three weeks (97). The collation, given by cardinal Birague, to Henry, in 1580, of which mention has already been made, was not ſerved in plate, but, in the Italian porcelain of Faenza, which was exceedingly beautiful. A circumſtance not to be omitted, is, that the greater part of the diſhes, amounting to above eleven hundred in number, were broken in pieces by the pages and lacqueys in attendance (98). Under the ſame reign, it appears that the uſe of glaſs at meals became common. Ronſard, in one of his poetical compoſitions, entitled "Le Verre," laviſhes the warmeſt encomiums on the introduction of an article, at once ſo elegant and ſo clean. He peculiarly praiſes their ſubſtitution in the place of thoſe maſſy goblets of gold and ſilver, which were antecedently in general uſe at the tables of the great (99).

Porcelain.

Want of domeſtic convenience.

Notwithſtanding the magnificence diſplayed on particular occaſions, by the nobility, and the oſtentatious parade of wealth or grandeur; it is certain, that general comfort or convenience were unknown. Almoſt all thoſe inventions of domeſtic eaſe and enjoyment, ſo familiar in the preſent age, and ſo univerſally diffuſed, did not then exiſt, even in the palaces of princes. Chairs were ſcarcely known; and only coffers, or benches, were to be found in the houſes of the wealthy. We find no better fur-

Chairs.

(96) Buſbeq. letter 48, p. 235. (97) Ibid. letters 46 and 48.
(98) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 112 and 113.
(99) Œuvres de Ronſard, 2d Bocage Royal, p. 130—134.

niture

niture in the queen-mother's chamber, at Bourdeaux, in 1566; or, in the royal apartments of the Louvre, in 1572 (100). Brantome ſeldom, if ever, mentions any other kind of ſeats, except cheſts (101). Under Henry the Third, arm-chairs were invented; but, their uſe was confined to the court, and almoſt the ſovereign (102). In the enumeration of the pieces of furniture, expoſed at the ceremony of the conſtable of Montmorenci's funeral, we find only one chair, covered with velvet, which was that belonging to the deceaſed, and in which he was uſed to ſit at table (103). So valuable was furniture, that kings themſelves conſtantly removed it from one palace to another, or inhabited apartments almoſt deſtitute of any. In 1584, Catherine of Medicis, finding her ſon, the duke of Anjou, in a hopeleſs ſtate of health, at Chateau Thierry upon the river Marne, ſtripped the caſtle of its moſt coſtly moveables, which ſhe cauſed to be put into boats, and tranſported to Paris by water. She executed this act, which appears to us ſo indecent, on the firſt of June; and the duke expired nine days afterwards (104). It would, however, ſeem to be evident, from the compariſon of all the accounts left us by the contemporary writers, that furniture, in the ſixteenth century, was principally compriſed in the three articles of tapeſtry, beds, and carpets; and it is to be obſerved, that of theſe, none were fabricated by the French themſelves. Milan furniſhed the beds; Flanders, the hangings, long known by the name of Arras; and the carpets were imported from the Levant. We find, that on the deceaſe of great perſonages, the tapeſtries were uſually taken down, as a mark of

Mode of ſtripping the houſes of the dying.

Furniture moſtly imported.

(100) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 200. Memoires de Marg. de Valois, p. 59.
(101) Brantome, vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 273.
(102) Art. de Verif. vol. i. p. 659.
(103) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 103.
(104) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 177.

ſorrow

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sorrow or mourning. In 1589, Henry the Third, to expreſs the depth of his affliction for his mother's loſs, cauſed the walls of all the apartments of ſtate at Blois, to be painted black, ſown with tears (105).

Carriages.

Carriages, an eſſential component of modern luxury, were unknown in France at the end of Henry the Second's reign; but, we ſee them mentioned almoſt immediately afterwards. Chriſtina of Denmark, ducheſs of Lorrain, who attended the ceremony of Charles the Ninth's inauguration, in 1561, at Rheims, is one of the firſt perſons ſtated to have been drawn in a coach. Brantome deſcribes the vehicle accurately, as an eye-witneſs. "It was," ſays he, "very magnificent, and entirely covered "with black velvet, on account of her widowhood. "Four white Turkiſh horſes drew it, the moſt beau- "tiful that could be choſen, and harneſſed all four "abreaſt, like a triumphal chariot. The ducheſs "was at one of the doors, habited in a gown of "black velvet; but, her head was ſuperbly dreſſed "in white. At the other door, ſat one of her "daughters (106)." It may be a matter of doubt, whether, at that time, Catherine of Medicis herſelf had any coach. Brantome expreſsly aſſerts, that they did not exiſt under her huſband's reign (107). Before 1573, they were become ſo common, that Sir Francis Walſingham returned from Fontainbleau to Paris, on his way to England, in a chariot of Charles the Ninth, which the king had ordered for him, as a mark of attention to Elizabeth's embaſſador (108). In the following year, coaches are mentioned as the ordinary conveyance of the queen-mother; and, in 1575, in order to prevent the

Coaches.

(105) De Thou, vol. x. p. 503.
(106) Brant. vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 123.
(107) Ibid. Cap. Etrang. p. 288.
(108) Letter of Catherine of Medicis, dated the 29th April, 1573, in Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 330.

eſcape

eſcape of the duke of Alençon and king of Navarre, they were tranſported in carriages, from Lyons, acroſs France, to Rheims (109).

Chariots.

Their encreaſe.

Nearly about the ſame period, Margaret, queen of Navarre, deſcribes her chariot, as being "gilt "on the outſide, and within, lined with a yellow "velvet, edged with ſilver (110)." Towards the cloſe of Henry the Third's reign, perſons of eminence, all over the kingdom, travelled in carriages. Chiverny, in 1588, talks of his coach, as a part of his eſtabliſhment (111). They were become ſo general in the metropolis, before 1589, that, as we learn from a contemporary writer, citizens of rank and conſideration, kept one, or even two coaches, for their own uſe (112). The firſt preſident of the parliament of Toulouſe, Duranti, was returning in his coach, through the ſtreets of the city, to his houſe, in January, 1589, when he was attacked, and at length murdered, by the populace (113).

Litters.

Litters continued, notwithſtanding, to be long uſed, as the moſt commodious and indulgent mode of conveyance. They were uſually borne by mules (114). Henry the Third, on his return to Savoy, acroſs the Alps, in 1574, was carried in "a glazed litter;" while Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy, proceeded on horſeback, at the head of his troops (115). Coaches were not only unwieldy, but, rough; and, independant of the ornaments uſed to decorate them, the carts of the preſent age may be pronounced a far more agreeable vehicle. When Margaret, queen of Navarre, undertook her celebrated political journey to Spa, in 1577, ſhe preferred a litter; and

Deſcription of the queen of Navarre's litter.

(109) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 400. Sully, vol. i. p. 15.
(110) Vie de Marg. p. 144. Mem. de Marg. p. 49.
(111) Chiverny, Mem. vol. i. p. 114.
(112) Satyre Menip. vol. iii. p. 199.
(113) De Thou, vol. x. p. 567.
(114) Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 224.
(115) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 133.

ſent

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ſent her attendants in coaches, or chariots: for, ſhe uſes the term indifferently. Her deſcription of the cavalcade, is equally entertaining and curious. "I "went," ſays ſhe, "in a litter conſtructed with pil- "lars, and lined with ſcarlet Spaniſh velvet, em- "broidered with gold and ſilk. The litter was en- "tirely glazed (116)."—"It was followed by thoſe "of the princeſs of la Roche ſur Yonne, and of "Madame de Tournon; by ten young ladies on "horſeback, with their governeſſes; and by ſix "coaches, or chariots, in which went the remain- "ing ladies and female attendants (117)."

Horſes.

There is ſcarcely any circumſtance which excites more aſtoniſhment, than the enormous prices paid for horſes, particularly, for chargers, during the period under our review. They appear to have been

Mules.

chiefly reſerved for war, or for parade. Mules were uſed on ordinary occaſions, even by ſovereigns. Ladies commonly rode a ſmall breed of horſes, called haqueneys (118). Francis the Firſt had twelve mules, for his own immediate uſe. When the cardinal of Lorrain went to Bruſſels, in 1559, to ratify the peace between the crowns of France and Spain, he had with him, thirty ſumpter mules, covered with crimſon velvet, on which were embroidered his arms and cardinal's hat, in gold or ſilver (119). The joint eſtabliſhment of Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, when only dukes of Orleans, and of Angouleme, in their childhood, conſiſted of ſix mules; four little haqueneys for their own mounting; and ſix nags for their eſquires (120).

Progreſs of luxury.

"I perfectly remember, as a boy," adds Brantome, "that Margaret, ſiſter of Francis the Firſt, that

(116) Mem. de Marg. p. 98.
(117) Vie de Marg. p. 201 and 202.
(118) Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 112.
(119) Ibid. p. 213.
(120) Ibid. vol. ii. Cap. Etrang. p. 234.

"great

"great queen of Navarre, had only three sumpter "mules, and six for her two litters. She had, it is "true, three or four 'chariots' for her females. "At present, neither men nor women, are content "with so small a number (121)." Noblemen, general officers, and magistrates, when riding out for pleasure or business, were mounted upon mules (122). In 1581, the price of a common one, was, it seems, about forty-five crowns (123). Montaigne had purchased three short-tailed nags, a few days before, for a hundred crowns (124). Brantome says, that the price of that breed of horses had doubled, in his time, having risen from thirty to sixty crowns (125). But, it is in Montluc and in Sully, that we see, with amazement, the sums given for fine horses. From a hundred, to a hundred and fifty crowns, are the smallest, of which they make mention. It is, however, to be remarked, that they always speak of chargers and coursers, used in war. Only strong horses could carry the immense weight of a man cased in complete armor. The animal himself was frequently barded or covered with iron mail, in front. One of that description, Montluc estimates at above seventy pounds sterling (126). Sully assures us, that he sold two horses; one to the "vidame" of Chartres, for three hundred crowns; and the other, a beautiful creature, of a Spanish breed, to the duke of Nemours, for six hundred. Such a sum, allowing for the difference in the value of money, would be esteemed high, even for a racer of the first reputation, in the present age (127). A very considerable traffic was

Augmentation of the price of horses.

Trade in horses.

(121) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etrang. p. 235.
(122) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 204. Ibid. vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 149.
(123) Voyages de Montaigne, vol. iii. p. 459.
(124) Ibid. p. 452, 453.
(125) Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 319.
(126) Montluc, Commentaries, vol. iv. p. 228—230.
(127) Sully, vol. i. p. 43.

carried

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carried on between the German empire, and France, in the article of horſes. Men of quality did not, it ſeems, diſdain to become dealers; and we find, that Sully made prodigious profits, by buying up ſmall horſes in Germany, where they were to be procured at low prices; and afterwards ſelling them for large ſums, in Gaſcony. He owns, that he, in a great meaſure, maintained the expence of his houſehold, by this lucrative commerce (128).

Pages.

It was one of the principal modes of providing for youth, to place them as pages in the families of the great. Gentlemen of ſlender fortunes had recourſe to the protection of the wealthy nobility, to receive their children. Fidelity, obedience, and adherence, were exacted on one ſide: patronage and ſupport were extended on the other. Sovereigns maintained a vaſt number about their perſons, and in their court; who, after a few years, when they attained to a proper age, were incorporated in the cavalry or infantry. They were divided into diſtinct claſſes, or departments; of the bed-chamber, the great ſtables, the royal hunt, the falconry, and other branches of the houſehold. Henry the Second uſually retained above a hundred and twenty pages, of whom he annually diſpatched at leaſt fifty, to the wars (129). How ſevere was the diſcipline, and how abſolute the power arrogated over them, may be judged, from the entertaining deſcription given us by Brantome. "My father, and "Monſieur d'Etrées," ſays he, "had, both, been "brought up pages of the queen, Anne of Bre-"tagne, and they rode upon the mules of her litter. "I have often heard them ſay, that ſhe cauſed them "to be ſeverely whipped, whenever they did not "properly guide the mules, or if they ſtumbled the

Their numbers.

Severity of their treatment.

(128) Sully, vol. i. p. 41.
(129) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 43.

"leaſt

" leaſt in the world. My father rode upon the " foremoſt; and Monſieur d'Etrées, upon the " ſecond. When their time was expired, ſhe ſent " them both into Italy, to the army (130)." The correction of the whip, or of the rod, ſo much diſuſed among us in the preſent times, was not, by any means, confined to boys, in the ſixteenth century. Young women of high condition were frequently ſubjected to that humiliating puniſhment. " Cathe- " rine of Medicis," ſays Brantome, " cauſed ma- " demoiſelle de Limeuil, and two others of her " companions, all of them maids of honor, to be " moſt ſeverely flogged, for having written a paſ- " quinade upon the court (131)." So numerous were the pages, about the palaces of kings, that they compoſed a formidable body; more eſpecially, as they were in the firſt fire of youth, and enthuſiaſtically attached to their reſpective lords. A quarrel having ariſen in the caſtle of Blois, during the convocation of the States, in November, 1588, between the pages of the duke of Montpenſier, and thoſe of the duke of Guiſe, in which a page of the latter was left dead upon the ſpot; the whole court took the alarm. All the nobility, princes, and the king himſelf, having armed themſelves, repaired to the place; and if the duke of Guiſe had ſhewn the ſmalleſt inclination to bring matters to an iſſue, a general carnage would have commenced between the two factions of the Royaliſts and the League. Henry, after ſo ſerious an outrage on the majeſty of the throne, and the reſpect due to the reſidence of the ſovereign, iſſued an order, prohibiting every page, or footman, from preſuming to enter the court of the caſtle with arms, on pain of chaſtiſement with the whip (132).

Danger ariſing from their numbers.

(130) Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 224.
(131) Ibid. vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 421.
(132) De Thou, vol. x. p. 415—417. Davila, p. 787.

Such

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Such was the reſpect borne by gentlemen towards thoſe under whom they had been brought up as pages, that no length of time, or elevation, however great, could cancel and obliterate the obligation. "Monſieur d'Eſſe," ſays Brantome, "who "had been page to Andrew de Vivonne, my grand-"father, although he roſe to the higheſt military "and civil dignities, yet, when he came to viſit "my grandmother, would never permit himſelf to "waſh his hands at the ſame time with her, on "ſitting down to table; declaring, that it was im-"poſſible for him to loſe the becoming recollection "of his having been a domeſtic ſervant in her "houſe (133)." It is evident, that much of this reverence had been loſt, after the commencement of the civil commotions, which deeply affected and changed the national manners. In 1563, Catherine of Medicis, writing to her ſon, Charles the Ninth, and exhorting him to follow the examples of his father and grandfather, in the manner of holding, or regulating his court, thus expreſſes herſelf: "Under the two laſt reigns, the archers of the "guard were uſually in the apartments, on the "ſtair-caſes, and in the court-yards, to prevent "the pages and lacqueys from gaming, as they "preſume to do at preſent; nay, to hold regular "gaming tables in the caſtle itſelf where you are "lodged, with oaths and blaſphemies: a thing "execrable (134)!" La Noue, who diſcuſſes the advantages, derived from the cuſtom of placing the youth, in quality of pages about the great nobility; and who expoſes, with energy, the characteriſtic vices inſeparable from that mode of education; informs us how relaxed the ſuperintendance was become under Henry the Third. "We have ſeen

Reſpect paid by pages, to their maſters.

Diſſolution of manners, under Charles the Ninth.

Conſequences of it.

(133) Brant. vol. ii. p. Cap. Fran. p. 183.
(134) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 452.

"princes

"princes and noblemen," says he, "who received such a number of pages, that they abandoned all care, not only of their instruction, but even of their cloathing. Instances have been known of pages, who were without breeches, and who were left to play at bowls with lacqueys and stable boys (135)." It cannot, however, be questioned, that the institution, in itself, was a beneficial one; and peculiarly, as a resource to the inferior gentry, who thus provided for their numerous sons. It may be considered as a nursery, from which the military service was, likewise, furnished with continual recruits; and many of the ablest commanders in the sixteenth century, had been in the condition of pages. Cheleque, and Klinquebert, two German youths, in that employment, under Francis, duke of Guise, and who were, unfortunately, too active in the memorable massacre of Vassy, in 1562, rose to a very considerable degree of military eminence, as well as to an uncommon share of royal favor. One of them constantly carried the duke's fowling piece; and the other, his pistols (136).

Benefits arising from the custom of having pages.

Besides pages, the great entertained in their service a prodigious number of domestics, or lacqueys, who were commonly armed, and ready on every occasion, to espouse the quarrels, or to aid the resentment of their master. We find, that in 1584, Henry the Third, when reforming his household, dismissed at once, near a hundred and thirty valets. They were reduced from a hundred and fifty, to twenty-four (137). Even Don Antonio, the exiled king of Portugal, kept about sixty servants, after his defeat at the Azores, and his return to France (138).

Lacqueys.

Their numbers.

(135) La Noue, p. 117—119, and p. 124.
(136) Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 88.
(137) Busbeq. letter 31, p. 181.
(138) Ibid. p. 122.

They

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They were armed.

They were frequently ſelected and retained, more for their courage and ſkill in managing weapons of offence, than from any other motive. Montluc tells us, that he knew a gentleman, who never took any ſervant into his employ, till he had put a ſword into the man's hand, and aſcertained, by actual proof, that he was maſter of the ſcience of fencing. By this means, he drew to him a number of reſolute, and ſkilful guards for his protection, or devoted miniſters of his revenge (139). The marquis of Meilleraye having killed Livarot, one of the minions of Henry the Third, in a duel, was murdered by the lacquey of his antagoniſt, as he returned from the place of action (140). How dangerous was it to moleſt them, and how formidable were their numbers, we may collect from many inſtances.

Danger of moleſting them.

The duke of Orleans, youngeſt ſon to Francis the Firſt, having, in a juvenile frolic, attacked the lacqueys, who were in poſſeſſion of the bridge of Amboiſe, at the head of a band of the young nobility, during the night, was received by them in ſo reſolute a manner, that he ran the moſt imminent hazard of his life. Caſtelnau who interpoſed, and received the thruſt made at him, fell dead upon the ſpot (141).

Buffoons.

Buffoons, or jeſters, performed the part of no inconſiderable perſonage in the court of ſovereigns, during the period under our conſideration. If we may believe the ſtory related by Brantome, and which bears in it the ſtrong marks of authenticity, they ſometimes were entitled to a more reſpectable appellation, and might rather be denominated monitors. Louis the Eleventh, ſays he, was overheard by his fool, in the act of confeſſing the murder of his brother, the duke of Guienne, and im-

(139) Montluc, Commentaries, vol. iv. p. 290 and 291.
(140) Brant. Les Duels, p. 110.
(141) Ibid. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 345 and 346.

ploring

ploring the interpoſition of the virgin, to procure from the Divine Being, his forgiveneſs for the crime. The king was on his knees, before the altar of "our "lady of Clery," when he made a diſcloſure of ſo much conſequence; and paid no attention to the buffoon, as conceiving him too contemptible and deſtitute of comprehenſion, either to hear, or to retain the fact. But, the jeſter, who had been in the ſervice of the murdered duke, and who bore an affection to his memory, reproached the king, as he ſat at table, with his guilt, and accuſed him, from his own confeſſion, with having diſpatched his brother. It may be well ſuppoſed, that a prince leſs flagitious than Louis the Eleventh, could not digeſt ſo unexpected a reprimand. The author of it expiated with his life, the imprudence, or honeſty of his conduct; which, probably, in the eſtimation of the courtiers, might paſs for an inconteſtible proof of folly (142). His ſucceſſors appear to have taken warning by his fate, and to have occupied themſelves rather in amuſing, than in troubling their maſters.

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Anecdote of Louis the Eleventh.

The buffoon of Henry the Second, Bruſquet, who attained to ſome celebrity in his profeſſion, ſeems to have been a cunning, rapacious, ſagacious knave, who was allowed to divert the king, in any way, and at the expence of all thoſe who frequented the court. He was made poſt-maſter of Paris, and amaſſed very conſiderable wealth, partly by pilfering, and partly by benefactions, or donations of various kinds. If we may judge of his powers of exciting mirth, from the numerous ſpecimens given us by Brantome, he would not, in the preſent age, have been thought ſufficiently witty, or expert, to have played the part of a Merry Andrew, in a country fair. Yet, he certainly contributed greatly to enliven the drawing-room of Catherine of Medicis (143). It is, how-

Bruſquet. His riſe, and hiſtory.

(142) Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 30—32.
(143) Ibid. vol. ii. Cap. Etrang. p. 266—286.

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ever, to be obſerved, that a thouſand tricks were played with him, as well as by him; and that, provided the king and queen were only amuſed, it was a matter of little conſequence how ſeverely Bruſquet ſuffered. The cardinal of Lorrain, when going on an embaſſy to pope Paul the Fourth, could not diſpenſe with the ſociety of ſo agreeable a companion, whom he, therefore, carried with him to Rome (144). It is not a little entertaining, to ſee, that at the peace in 1559, between the crowns of France and Spain, the firſt interchange of amity between the two monarchs, is the reciprocal preſent of their reſpective jeſters. But, the Spaniſh fool was a mere "Buffo "Magro," ſays Brantome, compared with ours, who preſerved over him a vaſt ſuperiority (145). Philip the Second relaxed from his Caſtilian gravity, in his treatment of Bruſquet; and Henry the Second, not to be behind-hand in munificence, or politeneſs, loaded the foreign jeſter with preſents (146). Brantome, after enumerating all the eminent buffoons of five ſucceeding reigns, gives the decided preference to Bruſquet's jeſts; and only laments, that, at laſt, he became ſuſpected of a ſerious attachment to the reformed religion. For this crime, one of the moſt heinous which he could have committed, he loſt his place, was plundered, and driven to take refuge with the ducheſs of Bouillon, where he ſoon after died in obſcurity and indigence (147).

Credit enjoyed by him.

His diſgrace.

Jeſters.

Great perſonages ſeem never to have travelled without at leaſt one jeſter, to diſſipate the melancholy of their own reflexions, or to enliven the converſation. Margaret, daughter of Francis the Firſt, when on her journey into Savoy, in 1559, was al-

(144) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Etrang. p. 283.
(145) Ibid. p. 291. (146) Ibid. p. 292.
(147) Ibid. p. 293 and 294.

lowed

lowed two buffoons, to diſperſe her chagrin. The proviſion was not too ample; for, the chief jeſter being ſeized with a fever at Rouane, not far from Lyons, the ſecond was compelled to exert all his talents to divert the princeſs. L'Hopital, who accompanied her, and who has left us a poetic Latin journal of the route from Paris to Nice, which may vie with the fifth ſatire of the firſt book of Horace, deſcribes the nature of the efforts made by Margaret's jeſter. They betray neither extent, nor variety of abilities. "Having covered himſelf," ſays l'Hopital, "with a fox's ſkin, and beſmeared his face with "flour, he began the ſatire's dance, mimicking at "the ſame time the ſilly and ridiculous movements "of the peaſants. Gradually augmenting his ad-"dreſs, he contrived to ſeat him elf upon a large "ſtick, while he embraced both his thighs. Every "one who attempted to imitate him, fell down; "and their fall only increaſed the laughter of the "ſpectators (148)." It muſt be owned, that ſuch a diverſion does not convey any very elevated idea of the taſte of the age.

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Nature of their wit and humour.

Cardinals, and great prelates, had always jeſters in their train. "The conſtable Montmorency," ſays Brantome, "was ſo fond of Thony, the "buffoon, that he uſually had him at dinner, and "placed him on a joint-ſtool near himſelf, treating "him like a little king. If the pages or lacqueys "diſpleaſed him, they were whipped (149)." It appears, that the profeſſion was by no means excluſively limited to men: there were female jeſters; and Brantome cites the repartees of mademoiſelle Sevin, who occupied that employment in the houſehold of the queen of Navarre (150). When the famous

Thony.

Female jeſters.

(148) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Epitres, p. 283.
(149) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 126.
(150) Ibid. Dames Gal. p. 181.

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countefs of Guiche, miſtreſs of the king of Navarre, went to maſs, in 1584, at Nerac, in Gaſcony, d'Aubigné aſſures us, that ſhe was regularly accompanied by a running footman, a buffoon, a Moor, a lacquey, an ape, and a water ſpaniel (151). We muſt confeſs, that the manners of thoſe times, were very eſſentially different from our own.

Watches.

Among the ornaments, or inventions, become common under Henry the Third, may be reckoned watches. The firſt, ever ſeen in France, was found among the ſpoils of the marquis del Guaſto, the Imperial commander, after the battle of Cerizoles, in 1544. It was ſent by the duke of Enghien, to Francis the Firſt, and formed an object of admiration to his courtiers (152). They were commonly worn, hanging from the neck, in 1588 (153).

Snuff.

The introduction and uſe of ſnuff among the French, is, likewiſe, due to this period. John Nicod, a maſter of requeſts, on his return from an embaſſy to Portugal, brought ſome of it to Paris. It was at firſt denominated from him, "La Nicodine;" but, Catherine of Medicis liking the herb, and taking it herſelf, it received the name of "L'Herbe à la Reine," by which it was long diſtinguiſhed (154).

(151) D'Aub. Memoires p. 102.
(152) Brant. vol. i. Cap. Etrang. p. 390.
(153) L'Etoile, p. 108.
(154) Lettres du Card. d'Oſſat, vol. i. p. 5, note.

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Paſſion for martial exerciſes.—Tournaments, and combats at the barrier.—Judicial combats.—Relation of that between Jarnac and La Chataigneraye.—Defiances.—Diverſions.—Entertainments.—Sports.—Occupations.—Colours.—Devices.—Rage for gaming.—Theatrical repreſentations.—Falſe coiners.—Retainers.—Spies.—Duels.—Aſſaſſinations.—Murders.—Study and practice of magic.—Demoniacs.—Enchantments.—Aſtrology.—Horoſcopes and calculations of nativity.—Tranſmutation of metals, and alchymy.—Pilgrimages and jubilees.—Roads.—Inns.—Frequency, and ravages of the plague.—Diſtempers.—Review of the characteriſtic vices and virtues of the period.——Concluſion.

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Paſſion for martial exerciſes.

ONE of the ſtrongeſt features which characteriz-ed the period under our review, was the paſſion for martial exerciſes. It pervaded every ſpecies of diverſion or amuſement, and rendered them fierce, dangerous, and ſanguinary. The genius and ſpirit of chivalry, however rapidly on their decline, were yet far from being extinct; and the fatal accident, by which Henry the Second loſt his life, though it checked the rage for tournaments, did not produce their ſuppreſſion or abolition. A knowledge of fencing in all its extent, and a perfect acquaintance with the ſcience of offence and defence, was not merely the accompliſhment of a gentleman: it was indiſpenſable for the abſolute preſervation of life and honor. Every weapon had its reſpective maſters, or profeſſors, who excelled in their uſe, or management; and in order to be prepared for occurrences, it was neceſſary to be equally ſkilful with the

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Practice of arms.

with the harquebuſs, the ſword, the dagger, and the lance. Rome, Milan, and Ferrara, ſupplied the moſt expert gladiators, for the inſtruction of the French youth; who uſually paſſed a conſiderable portion of their early life, in acquiring ſuch a degree of dexterity in the practice of arms, as to extricate themſelves with ſucceſs from the frequent quarrels, which aroſe upon the ſlighteſt occaſions (1). The young men of condition were occupied during whole days, in fencing; and the lower chambers of the Louvre, which were the ſcene of their paſtime, might be regarded as a ſort of ſchool, or academy, for thoſe exerciſes of the body (2). D'Aubigné deſcribes the court of Nerac, as filled with gentlemen, employed in the ſame diverſion (3).

Running at the ring.

Of the various ſpecies of martial amuſements, frequent under the laſt princes of Valois, the only one which diſplayed the utmoſt vigor and addreſs without any mixture of perſonal danger, or hazard, was the running at the ring. It was commonly exhibited either during the carnival, or ſome occaſion of feſtivity; as the perſons were maſked, and diſguiſed by groteſque dreſſes, calculated to heighten the ſingularity of the ſpectacle. Female ornaments and attire were always preferred. "I ſaw," ſays Brantome, "a courſe at the ring, under Francis the "Second at Amboiſe, where the performers were "the grand prior of Lorrain, and the duke of "Nemours, two of the beſt cavaliers in France. "The grand prior was mounted on a barb, dreſſed "very elegantly as a Gipſey woman. On his head, "he wore the large round Gipſey hat; his gown "and petticoat were compoſed of velvet and taffety, "made very full. Within his left arm, he held,

Groteſque dreſſes worn.

Deſcription of a courſe, at Amboiſe.

(1) Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 427.
(2) Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. ii. p. 107.
(3) D'Aub. Memoires, p. 101.

"inſtead

" inſtead of a little child, a ſmall, female ape, " ſwaddled preciſely like an infant. But, after the " fourth courſe, he was obliged to diſembarraſs " himſelf of the animal. The duke of Nemours was " habited as a tradeſman's wife, with a hat and a " gown of black cloth: at his waiſt was a houſe- " wife's bag, and a large ſilver chain, to which was " faſtened a ring, with above a hundred keys hang- " ing on it. The noiſe made by the multitude of " keys, was very amuſing. Both the performers " were maſked: they made ten courſes; and at the " eleventh, the grand prior carried off the ring (4)."

Other inſtances.

We find Henry the Third engaged in the ſame diverſion at Paris, in 1576, when he wore the dreſs and arms of an Amazon (5). The king of Navarre excelled in every military, or manly exerciſe; and never, during his whole life, omitted any occaſion of diſplaying his ability and proweſs. He, and the prince of Condé tilted, and ran at the ring, in honor of d'Aubigné's nuptials, in 1581 (6).

Tournaments.

Tournaments, and combats at the barrier, were diverſions of a much fiercer ſpecies, and accompanied with perſonal danger, notwithſtanding all the precautions uſed to prevent their miſchievous conſequences. We cannot ſufficiently expreſs our amazement at the pertinacity with which not only the French, but, all the European nations, adhered to them, in defiance of cataſtrophes the moſt tragical, frequently repeated. In 1549, Henry the Second publiſhed through Italy, Germany, and Spain, the celebration of a great tournament. He himſelf, with the princes of the blood, were aſſailants, againſt Francis, duke of Guiſe, and others. Marſhal Tavannes was among the number. Every ceremony of

Danger and ſeverity of theſe amuſements.

(4) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 399—401.
(5) L'Etoile, p. 19.
(6) D'Aub. Memoires, p. 91. Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 186.

chivalry

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chivalry was religiously observed. Tavannes assures us, that he was the only one of the noblemen, maintaining the barrier, who escaped unwounded; that the diversion lasted eight days; and that he ordinarily broke sixty lances, every day (7). The death of Henry the Second, an event so productive of calamity, and so calculated to impress with lasting apprehension, could not prevent a renewal of the same games at Orleans, in the presence of Francis the Second, only a year afterwards. A youth of the royal blood, Henry of Bourbon, son to the prince of La Roche sur Yonne, was also killed, at the age of fourteen, by the shock which he received from the count of Maulevrier's horse (8). Those who only lost an eye, or received a severe wound, might be esteemed fortunate (9). In 1571, at the festival of Nogent, was held a combat at the barrier, which continued during two nights, and was performed by the light of torches. Henry, duke of Guise, maintained the barrier, on the first evening, against Charles the Ninth, and other assailants. The king was wounded in the foot, by his antagonist's sword, which broke, and caused a great effusion of blood. Catherine of Medicis, who had seen her husband perish in a tournament, had reason to be alarmed for the life of her son (10). One of the most magnificent exhibitions of this kind, was given before the Louvre, in August, 1572, in honor of the king of Navarre's nuptials, and only a few days preceding the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Charles the Ninth, and his brother were habited as Amazons: the king of Navarre, together with his attendants, assumed the Turkish dress, and were clothed in long robes of brocade, with turbans on

Examples.

Combats at the barrier. Festival of Nogent.

Combat of 1572.

(7) Tavannes, p. 127.

(8) L'Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 648. Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 304.

(9) Brant. vol. i. Cap Fran. p. 215.

(10) Manusc. au Depôt de Bethune, N°. 8722, cited in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 85.

their

their heads. The combatants encountered with lances, in presence of the queens, and all the ladies of the court (11). CHAP. VI.

Arts used.

We may see in the Memoirs of Marshal Tavannes, with what pains the nobility and gentlemen endeavoured to harden their bodies, and to inure themselves to support the shocks and injuries, so commonly received in these fierce amusements. He tells us, that at the tournament of 1549, he used every night to plunge his right arm into oil of sweet almonds, and to tie ligatures round it; by which means, while many of his companions had their arms entirely black with contusions, he preserved his vigor and freshness (12).

Taste of the diversions,

If we wish to form an estimate of the taste and elegance, which accompanied the diversions of the sixteenth century, we may see them fully displayed in the entertainments exhibited by Elizabeth, queen of England, in honor of her lover, Francis, duke of Anjou. On New Year's Day, 1582, a combat at the barrier was given, in the court of the palace of Westminster; where the duke, accompanied by several noblemen, French and English, of the highest quality, defied all comers. He entered the lists, in person, upon a carriage, constructed in form of a rock. His hands were fettered with golden chains, and he was conducted to the feet of Elizabeth, by love and destiny, who sung alternately sonnets composed in French, descriptive of the violence of his passion, and supplicating the queen to raise him to her throne and bed. The combat lasted till an hour after midnight, in presence of two or three thousand persons; and the device chosen by the duke of Anjou for the occasion, was,

"Servict æternum, dulcis quem torquet Eliza."

(11) Vie de Marg. p. 94. (12) Tavannes, p. 127.

His

CHAP. VI. in England.

His presents on that day, to different noblemen, and ladies of the English court, amounted in value, to near ten thousand crowns. To Elizabeth, he presented a ship, composed of precious stones, which she accepted with public testimonies of pleasure and attachment. The queen even gave him more personal and flattering marks of her predilection, by kissing and toying with him, before all the spectators. She afterwards condescended to conduct him to his apartment, and to visit him next day in his bed. Delicacy was not the distinguishing characteristic of female manners, in that century; and the sensations which ladies of her exalted rank experienced, they conceived themselves at liberty to express, without any reserve. It ought not to be forgotten, that this amorous princess was full forty-eight years of age, and her lover not more than twenty-seven. Masquerades, in which Elizabeth danced with the duke, succeeded to the combats at the barrier. Magic and enchantments were called in, to the aid of music and festivity. Imprisoned knights, detained by sorcery in the dungeons of a castle, were liberated by the interposition of "a "prince the most magnanimous, and constant in "love, and of a queen the most chaste, virtuous, "and heroic, who existed on earth." After extinguishing the Necromancer's lamp, which constituted the charm, Elizabeth, and Francis, advanced, and restored the captives to freedom. Every circumstance, attending these gallant, and magnificent diversions, may be found in the Memoirs of the duke of Nevers (13).

Decline of tournaments.

Under Henry the Third, it may be said that tournaments finally expired. The last memorable one, of which history makes mention, was given by the duke of Mayenne, at Grenoble, in Dauphiné.

(13) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 557—559.

Having

Having invited the nobility of the province, and even the Proteſtants, againſt whom he was about to make ſerious and effective war, to break a lance in honor of the ladies; many gentlemen, Catholic and Hugonot, relying on his honor, complied with the ſummons. Leſdiguieres himſelf, the general of the Calviniſt party, was among the number. Mayenne received him with every mark of reſpect and diſtinction; nor had any of thoſe who repaired to Grenoble on the aſſurance of protection, reaſon to repent of their confidence. This event took place in 1580 (14). Such was the fondneſs for tournaments, that they were varied in every ſhape, and not confined to a ſingle element. The water, as well as the land, became the ſcene of them. In 1568, Charles the Ninth exhibited to the Pariſians the ſpectacle of a combat on the Seine, in front of the palace of the Louvre. He himſelf, in perſon, defended a boat againſt his brother, the duke of Anjou, who was the aſſailant. Brantome, ſo celebrated for his Memoirs, which have preſerved a number of curious and intereſting anecdotes, highly elucidatory of the manners of that age, was an actor in the entertainment. He informs us, that he ſaved with difficulty, one of his comrades, the baron de Monteſquieu. from being drowned, by plunging into the water, and dragging him to the veſſel (15). With what fatal conſequences, the tournaments of the ſixteenth century were attended, at an earlier period of it, may be collected from numberleſs inſtances. The marquis of Peſcara, during the wars between France and Spain, having ſent a defiance to the duke of Nemours, the French commander, challenging him to an encounter with lances, each ac-

Combats on the water.

Fatal conſequences of them.

(14) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 388. Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 85.

(15) Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 221 and 222.

companied

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companied by three chosen followers; the offer was instantly accepted. They met on the day appointed, under the walls of Asti, in Piémont; and the leaders, after breaking their lances on each other's armor, without receiving any personal injury, raised their vizors, and interchanged embraces, with the utmost courtesy. But, on the part of their attendants, it did not end in so bloodless a manner. Two of the French, and one of the Spanish gentlemen, were mortally wounded, and either expired upon the spot, or only survived a few days (16).

Numbers killed.

Judicial combats.

The particular species of combat, denominated "judicial," from its being an appeal to the immediate justice and interposition of the Supreme Being, in favor of innocence, had not totally disappeared before the progress of reason, during the period under our examination. Francis the First permitted, and was present at several, in the course of his reign; rather, as it would seem, in compliance with the barbarous prejudices of preceding times, than from conviction or real approbation of their principle (17).

Combat of Jarnac, and La Chataigneraye.

The most celebrated combat of this kind, fought under the kings of the family of Valois, was between Jarnac and La Chataigneraye, in 1547, immediately after the accession of Henry the Second. The cause of quarrel originated during the reign of Francis the First; but, that prince, superior to the age in which he flourished, and grown parsimonious of the blood, as well as of the property of his subjects, prohibited the two parties from proceeding to extremities, on pain of his indignation (18). He had the enlargement of mind to say, in his privy council, when the matter was under debate, that "a sovereign ought never to sanction or permit an

(16) Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Etran. p. 10—12.
(17) Brant. Les Duels, p. 35 and 36.
(18) Brant. Ibid. p. 169 and 170.

"act,

" act, from which no public benefit could poſſibly " reſult." His ſucceſſor did not imitate him in ſo judicious and beneficial a line of conduct. He was, even, in ſome meaſure, implicated in the ſubject of diſpute, and perſonally intereſted in its iſſue; having aſſerted, that Jarnac had, in confidence, confeſſed to him, when dauphin, a criminal intimacy with his own mother-in-law. La Chataigneraye, who maintained the truth of the allegation, was, therefore, the royal champion. He was, beſides, in the flower of his age, a diſtinguiſhed favorite of the new monarch, and remarkable above every nobleman of the court, for vigor, addreſs, and courage. Jarnac laboured under many diſadvantages; but, his own exertions, and the preſumption of his enemy, decided the conteſt in his favor.

Origin and cauſe of it.

Every circumſtance attending this combat, which may be ſaid to have been the laſt memorable one of its kind, is ſo highly characteriſtic of the modes of thinking and acting, at the period when it happened, that they claim attention. The ſcene choſen, was the park of St. Germain, near Paris, in preſence of Henry the Second, ſurrounded by all the lords and ladies of his court. It was preceded by every ceremony and ſolemnity, uſual in the darkeſt ages; and the two combatants ſwore, " on the Evangeliſts, on " the true Croſs, and on the Faith of Baptiſm, that " they had not any charms, words, or incantations; " but, truſted wholly to God, their right, the force " of their body, and their arms (19)." Brantome, whoſe teſtimony on this occaſion may be regarded as, in ſome meaſure, partial to his uncle, La Chataigneraye, aſſerts, that he owed his misfortune, to Jarnac's adopting a piece of defenſive armor, not uſually worn; but, which the contempt of La Chataigneraye for his antagoniſt, induced him to over-

Circumſtances attending it.

Ceremonies uſed.

(19) Le Lab. ſur. Caſt. vol. ii. p. 558.

look

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look and admit (20). It was invented by one of thoſe Italian maſters of the ſcience of arms, who were then in ſuch reputation, and of whom Jarnac received inſtructions, previous to the onſet. The heralds having proclaimed ſilence, and enjoined every ſpectator "neither to cough, ſpit, nor pre-"ſume to make any manual ſign whatever," the weapons of offence were laſtly delivered. They conſiſted in a ſword, and two daggers; beſides two other ſwords of reſerve, which were held by the conſtable, as a ſupply, in caſe of accident. One of the heralds then gave the ſignal, by ſaying, "Let "them go, the good combatants (21)."

Weapons.

Iſſue of the combat.

The conteſt was ſoon decided: Jarnac, by a dextrous and unexpected back-ſtroke, cut the tendons of his adverſary's left leg, and repeated the blow, till he fell. It was in his power to have terminated all further hazard, by putting La Chataigneraye to death. But, conſcious of the king's partiality towards him, and ſatisfied with the advantage acquired, he uſed his victory with the utmoſt moderation. Leaving his wounded antagoniſt on the ground, he approached the place where Henry ſat; and putting himſelf on one knee, he beſought of his ſovereign to accept La Chataigneraye's life, and to reſtore him his own injured honor. It was not, however, till after three ſeparate requiſitions, made at diſtinct intervals; and till no hope remained of the combat being renewed, that Henry, ſolicited anew by Jarnac, exhorted by the duke of Vendome, and aſſured by the conſtable Montmorenci, of La Chataigneraye's deſperate condition, conſented to accept the proffered and forfeit boon. He afterwards embraced and commended Jarnac, declaring him reſtored in honor. La Chataigneraye, unable

(20) Brant. Les Duels, p. 50 and 51.
(21) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 558. Sully, vol. i. p. 346.

to

to ſurvive ſo public and humiliating a misfortune, tore the dreſſings from his wounds, and expired (22). The mixture of religion with gallantry, is not the leaſt ſingular circumſtance of this extraordinary tranſaction. Jarnac, finding his enemy extended on the ground, and incapable of reſiſtance, immediately fell upon his knees, and returned thanks aloud to God, lifting his hands and eyes to Heaven. He beat upon his breaſt with his gauntlet, exclaiming in Latin, "Lord, I am not worthy." Then, approaching the ſcaffold, on which the ladies were ſeated, among whom was one to whom he particularly addreſſed himſelf, he ſaid, "Madam, you "always aſſured me that it would terminate "thus (23)."

Spirit of gallantry, and of devotion.

The conqueror did not venture to uſe any of the privileges, allowed by the laws of chivalry to thoſe who vanquiſhed their adverſaries. How extenſive, as well as ignominious they were, we may judge from Brantome's account of a combat which took place at Sedan, beyond the limits of the French territories, ſoon after that between Jarnac and La Chataigneraye. Henry, equally ſhocked and chagrined at the diſaſtrous fate of his favorite, ſwore, never again, during his reign, to permit of a ſecond appeal to Heaven, by the mode of arms. Two gentlemen of his court, between whom a difference aroſe, had, therefore, recourſe to the duke of Bouillon, who, as an independant prince, inſtantly complied with the requeſt. But, one of the combatants, the Sieur de Fandilles, would not enter the place marked out for the liſts, till he had firſt ſeen a fire lighted, and a gibbet erected, on which he intended to hang, and afterwards conſume to aſhes, his antagoniſt's body (25). The regret of Henry

Privileges of the conqueror.

(22) Brant. Les Ducls, p. 48.
(23) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 559.
(24) Brant. Les Ducls, p. 4.

the

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the Second for La Chataigneraye's loſs, added to the progreſs of reaſon, gradually extinguiſhed, and inſenſibly aboliſhed theſe abſurd and ridiculous appeals, which favoured not more of folly, than of impiety. They may ſtill, however, be traced under Henry the Third; who was preſent at a judicial combat, between de Luines and Panier, in the commencement of his reign: but, the vogue which had antiently attended them, had completely ceaſed, before its cloſe (25). The embaſſador of Solyman the Second, who had been a ſpectator of Jarnac's ſucceſs, expreſſed his aſtoniſhment and diſapprobation, that a ſovereign ſhould thus publickly permit an act of deliberate murder to be performed in his preſence (26). So much more juſtly did a Mahometan and a Turk appreciate right and wrong, than the firſt monarch of the Chriſtian world; and ſo faint were the efforts of the human mind, in oppoſition to eſtabliſhed prejudices, little more than two centuries ago, among the moſt civilized people in Europe.

Decline of judicial combats.

Sentiments of the Ottoman embaſſador, on the inſtitution.

Solemn defiances, and challenges to ſingle combat, continued ſtill to characterize the age, and ſeem to have been as frequent as in the heroic times, when chiefs entruſted to their perſonal proweſs the fate of armies and nations. Previous to a general action, while the forces on either ſide were preparing to engage, it was cuſtomary for the moſt intrepid, or adventurous individuals, to quit the ranks, and riding forward, to demand of their adverſaries a ſtroke of a lance, in honor of the ladies (27). In 1577, we find the duke of Mayenne ſending to defy the prince of Condé, either ſingly, or with a choſen number of attendants. But, the anſwer returned

Defiances.

Inſtances of them.

(25) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 418.
(26) Brant. Les Duels, p. 206 and 207.
(27) Memoires de Marg. p. 183.

by

by the prince, was, that whatever inclination he might feel to accept the challenge, it was a received principle, that combats never took place, except among equals (28). Yet, the king of Navarre, ſome years afterwards, by a declaration, addreſſed to Henry the Third, requeſted permiſſion to equal himſelf with the duke of Guiſe, in order to decide the quarrel of the houſe of Bourbon with the League, by a combat between them, with arms uſed among knights (29). The moſt ſingular encounter of this nature, happened on the ſecond of Auguſt, 1589, only three or four hours after the deceaſe of Henry the Third. L'Iſle Marivaut, a royaliſt gentleman, ſtung with grief and rage at the aſſaſſination of the king, his maſter, and deſirous to avenge it, defied the troops of the duke of Mayenne, and demanded, if any one would engage him, according to the laws of chivalry. Claude de Marolles inſtantly accepted the defiance; and the combatants, completely armed, met, in the preſence of the two armies, under the walls of Paris. They were mounted on horſeback, and ruſhed forward at the ſame inſtant. Marivaut's lance was ſhivered on the cuiraſs of his adverſary, without effect: but, the ſpear of Marolles entered the eye of the royaliſt champion, who had neglected, from a preſumptuous confidence in his proweſs, to faſten his vizor. He expired immediately; and the preachers of the League, animated by ſo auſpicious an omen, predicted the infallible deſtruction of the party of the king of Navarre, againſt whom Providence ſeemed to manifeſt its anger. The event did not, however, juſtify the prediction (30).

Combat of Marolles and Marivaut.

Event of it.

(28) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 510.
(29) Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 8.
(30) Ibid. vol. i. p. 257. Journal d'Henry IV. vol. i. p. 1 and 2. Brant. Les Duels, p. 62—64.

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Taſte and elegance of the diverſions.

If we reflect upon the diverſity, taſte, and magnificence of the amuſements exhibited among the French, during the reigns of the four laſt princes of Valois, we ſhall find ample ſubject for admiration. In delicacy of conception, and even in the ſplendor of their execution, it may be pronounced that they were not greatly inferior to the boaſted pageants of Louis the Fourteenth, given near a century afterwards. As early as 1549, at the public entry of Henry the Second into Lyons, games, in imitation of the gladiatorial, and naval ſpectacles of the Romans, were preſented to that monarch (31). We may ſee in the Memoirs of Margaret of Valois, how ſuperb, and how varied were the entertainments, imagined by Catherine of Medicis, to divert the leiſure, and to enliven the interview of her daughter, Elizabeth, queen of Spain, at Bayonne, in 1565. She choſe for the ſcene of one of her moſt ſumptuous feſtivals, the little iſland, in the river Bidaſſoa, which ſeparates the kingdoms of France and Spain; afterwards rendered memorable by the peace of the Pyrenees, in the ſucceeding century, between Louis the Fourteenth, and Philip the Fourth. Tables were diſpoſed for the courtiers and nobility, male and female; that of the royal family, under a canopy, at one extremity of the apartment, being raiſed above the others by an aſcent of four ſteps, compoſed of turf. Companies of ſhepherdeſſes, dreſſed in cloth of gold and ſattin, and habited according to the dreſſes of the various French provinces, waited on the gueſts. They then performed the dances of their reſpective countries, in an adjoining meadow. On their paſſage by water, from Bayonne to the mouth of the Bidaſſoa, the ſplendid barges, in which the king, the queen-mother, and other attendants

Public games.

(31) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 13—22; and vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 388—392.

embarked,

embarked, were accompanied, or ſurrounded by marine deities, ſinging, and reciting verſes in honor of the occaſion. The banquet was terminated by a "ballet" of nymphs and ſatyrs, executed with equal delicacy and taſte.

Mythological, and allegorical repreſentations.

The mythology of antiquity was rifled and exhauſted, in the maſques and entertainments which accompanied the nuptials of the king of Navarre, in 1572. The impending deſtruction of the Hugonots at the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, ſeemed even to be pourtrayed in the enigmatical repreſentations performed before the court. It is difficult to ſuppoſe, that Catherine of Medicis could intend thus to warn them of their danger: it is equally difficult not to admit, that the application was ſo clear and obvious, as to ſtrike the leaſt ſuſpicious, or diſcerning.

Scenery.

The ſcenery repreſented the Elyſian Fields, or the Paradiſe of Moſes: for, the fables of Homer and Virgil were mixed, by a ſpecies of profanation, with the relation given in Scripture, of the Garden of Eden. A river, the Styx, traverſed the theatre, on which appeared the boat of Charon. Behind the Elyſium, was conſtructed an "Empyreal Heaven," containing within a piece of machinery, which had an orbicular motion, the twelve ſigns of the Zodiac, the ſeven planets, and an infinity of ſtars. Twelve nymphs, ſtationed in the Elyſian Fields, were protected by Charles the Ninth and his two brothers, who defended the entrance, armed from head to foot. On the other ſide of the Styx, appeared Hell, or "Tartarus," with its proper attributes. The king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and the Hugonot nobility, who aſſailed the Elyſian Fields, were overcome, and precipitated into the infernal regions. Mercury and Cupid then deſcended on the ſtage; and after different dances, the captives were releaſed. The repreſentation terminated by fire-works, which con-

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fumed to aſhes the whole machinery and decorations (32). The Heaven, vainly attacked by the king of Navarre; the precipitation of himſelf and his followers into Hell; and the flames which cloſed the exhibition; all appeared to have an allegorical alluſion. Four days afterwards, the maſſacre of Paris took place.

Splendid entertainments of the French court.

Magnificent as were the entertainments of 1572, they were excelled by thoſe of the following year, at the reception of the Poliſh embaſſadors, who came to offer the crown of their kingdom to the duke of Anjou. In one of them, the Poles beheld with pleaſure and aſtoniſhment, a prodigious maſs of rock, enchaſted with ſilver, which was moved by concealed mechaniſm. On the ſummit, were placed ſixteen of the moſt beautiful women of quality, emblematical of the ſixteen provinces of the kingdom of France. After ſinging, and repeating ſome verſes compoſed for the occaſion, by Ronſard and Dorat, they deſcended; preſented to the new monarch various offerings or teſtimonies of homage; and concluded by performing a dance (33). It is not eaſy to repreſent to ourſelves, even in the preſent age, any thing, conceived with more elegance of fancy. At the nuptials of the duke of Joyeuſe, which were celebrated in 1581, the queen, Louiſa, exhibited in the Louvre, a "ballet" of Circé and her nymphs, executed with incomparable grace, by the ladies of the royal houſehold (34). We can ſcarcely credit, notwithſtanding the well-known prodigality of Henry the Third, and the teſtimony of contemporary writers, that he expended in various feſtivities and diverſions, on the above-mentioned marriage, a ſum of not leſs than a hundred and fifty

Expence attending them.

(32) Vie de Marg. de Val. p. 90—92.
(33) Ibid. p. 123.
(34) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 134.

thouſand

thouſand pounds (35). Many of the maſques, or dances, given at court, were celebrated by Deſportes, the poet, who compoſed ſtanzas for the principal characters. We find in his works, the names of theſe diverſions, which are taken uſually from ſome mythological, or romantic fable. There is the maſquerade of the "Chevaliers fideles," and of the "Chevaliers agitez." In another, denominated the "Maſquerade of Viſions," Night and Morning appear, and repeat verſes in honor of the newly-married pair. They are ingenious, melodious, and full of grace (36). Ronſard introduces the moſt fantaſtic and ideal beings, or perſonages, in his maſques. The four elements, perſonified, come forward in one of them, to defy the four planets, who accept the challenge (37). Syrens, and mermaids, predict the future deſtiny of the French monarchs (38) Charles the Ninth, habited one while as the Sun, and at another as Hercules, pronounces a cartel to love, which is ſent by a dwarf. Such was the genius and taſte of the entertainments of that age.

Puerile amuſement.

The indecent puerility, or contempt of public opinion, manifeſted by Henry the Third, roſe to ſuch a pitch, that he did not bluſh to appear commonly in the ſtreets of his own capital, playing with a "Bilboquet." The faſhion became general: Joyeuſe and Epernon imitated their maſter; and in a ſhort time, all the gentlemen, pages, and even domeſtics, were ſeen every where in public, with the ſame appendage (39). It muſt be owned, that if rebellion was ever venial, it might plead ſome excuſe, when provoked by ſuch profuſion, folly,

(35) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 130.
(36) Œuvres de Portes, p. 460—470.
(37) Ibid, de Ronſard, Maſcarades, p. 127—129.
(38) Ibid.
(39) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 195.

and

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and abuſe of power. De Thou himſelf aſſures us, that the king expended above twelve thouſand pounds annually, in the ſingle article of little dogs; beſides the ſums conſumed on monkeys, parroquets, and other animals (40). The ball given by him to the Engliſh embaſſadors, in 1585, coſt him ten thouſand crowns (41). Two years afterwards, at Epernon's nuptials, he danced in public, with every indication of mirth, while, at his waiſt hung a large chaplet of ivory ſkulls (42). Like Heliogabalus, he affected the ornaments and dreſs of a woman. The accounts given us by Dion and Herodian, of the indecent appearance of the Syrian emperor of Rome, were realized by the French monarch. In 1577, he commonly frequented public entertainments, in a female attire; his doublet open, and his boſom bare; with a necklace of pearls, and three little capes, as they were then worn by the ladies of the court (43).

Balls.

Effeminacy, and indecorum.

It would, however, be unjuſt, to appreciate the general character of the age, even in its paſtimes, by the conduct or actions of ſo relaxed and effeminate a prince. The ſports of the period were not only manly; but rough, hazardous, and daring, to a point of temerity. Marſhal Tavannes was accuſtomed, when young, to amuſe himſelf with his companions, in leaping acroſs the ſtreets of Paris, from the roof of one houſe to that of another (44). In preſence of the court, at Fontainbleau, he undertook, and performed a leap on horſeback, of twenty-eight feet, from rock to rock (45). Frolics the moſt adventurous and deſperate were common, particularly in time of carnival, when every indiſcre-

Rude diverſions of the age.

Examples.

(40) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 599.
(41) L'Etoile, p. 85.
(42) Ibid. p. 102. (43) Ibid. p. 21.
(44) Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 326.
(45) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 527.

tion

tion seemed to be sanctioned by the season. Henry the Second, in 1558, accompanied by the princes and youth of his court, on Shrove Tuesday, a day peculiarly distinguished for extravagant demonstrations of conviviality, rode through the streets of Paris, masked, committing the rashest actions. In a fit of wild emulation, the whole company mounted the great stair-case of the hall in which were held the courts of justice, and galloped furiously down again, without incurring any accident (46). We find Henry the Third himself, in the carnival of 1583, and the following year, performing the same mad exploits, followed by his brother, the duke of Anjou, and his minions (47). They rode at full speed through the capital in masks, overturning, beating, and ill-using every one who fell in their way. On the night of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, when the assassins came to the door of the count de la Rochefoucault's apartment, and demanded entrance; he had so little suspicion of any design against his life, that he imagined it to be Charles the Ninth himself, at the head of a band of young courtiers, bent on some juvenile frolic. Impressed with this idea, he rose, and dressed himself, exclaiming all the time, "These "are the tricks of the late king, your father; "but, you will not catch me thus." The door was no sooner opened, than he was instantly murdered (48).

Henry the Second.

Charles the Ninth.

Occupations the most severe and laborious, were considered as pastimes, and practised by sovereign princes for their diversion. Charles the Ninth beheaded animals, dissected them, and performed the functions of an executioner and a butcher, with singular address (49). The present age, however

Occupations and amusements of the great.

(46) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 401.
(47) L'Etoile, p. 62 and 75.
(48) Brant. vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 9 and 10.
(49) Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. iii. p. 25.

refined,

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refined, has not been wanting in a ſimilar example of a crowned head, one of whoſe greateſt enjoyments conſiſted in opening, and embowelling the deer, or other game, which he had previouſly killed.

Forging armor.

It was common for Charles the Ninth to work at the forge, and even to make with his own hands the barrels of muſquets and harquebuſſes (50). Brantome ſays, that Philibert Emanuel, duke of Savoy, conſtantly amuſed himſelf at the ſame robuſt exerciſe; and, that he had ſeen the duke practiſe at his forge, in the garden of the palace, at Turin (51).

Coining.

There was not any piece of coin, either gold or ſilver, which Charles the Ninth had not learnt to ſtrike ſo exquiſitely, and to counterfeit ſo perfectly, as to deceive the niceſt eye. It was one of his favorite recreations to fabricate them, and to ſhew them to his courtiers (52). We can ſtill leſs reconcile to our manners and ideas of royal decorum, his introduction of ten thieves and common cutpurſes, into the drawing-room of the Louvre, during a crouded ball and feſtival; with orders to them to exercife their addreſs, at the expence of the company. He gave them aſſurance of impunity; watched their feats of dexterity; reviewed the amount of their plunder, which exceeded in value fifteen hundred crowns; permitted them to retain it; and then diſmiſſed them with menaces of being inſtantly hanged, if ever they ventured to repeat their depredations (53). It muſt be confeſſed, that ſuch a conduct was not much calculated to amend the morals, or effect the reformation of that claſs of his ſubjects.

Bear-hunting.

Bear-hunting was one of the ſports of the court of Navarre. How hazardous was the purſuit of thoſe

(50) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 25. Brant. vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 28.
(51) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 164 and 166.
(52) Ibid. vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 29.
(53) Ibid. p. 29—31.

animals,

animals, and how fatal the accidents which continually attended the chace, we may see in Sully. In 1578, during the course of one given by the court of Navarre, in the province of Foix, at the foot of the Pyrenees; a bear, pursued by the hunters, and driven to madness by the number of lances fixed in his body, seized seven or eight soldiers stationed on the point of a rock, and precipitating himself with them, dashed them to pieces (54). These tragical adventures neither diminished the ardor of the sportsmen, nor tended to humanize and soften the genius of the diversions. CHAP. VI.

Colors and devices.

The period of time under our review, may be justly called the age of colors and devices. The former were worn, in honor of their mistresses, by kings, noblemen, and gentlemen of every rank. Marriage imposed no restraint in this particular. At the naval games exhibited before Henry the Second and his queen, by the city of Lyons, in 1549, the gallies which obtained the honors of triumph, were decorated with black and white, in compliment to the king and his mistress, Diana of Poitiers. Those which were vanquished, displayed green; the color always affected by Catherine of Medicis, before her husband's death (55). No umbrage whatever appears to have been taken by her, at so public a mark of homage to her rival. On the day when Henry was killed by Montgomery, in the lists at Paris, he was distinguished by the same livery. The three other princes, who maintained the barrier with the king, against all assailants, and who were the dukes of Guise, Nemours, and Ferrara, each appeared in the colors of their respective mistresses (56). "Buffy d'Amboise wore," says Brantome, "two 'favors,' given him by his mistress; one in his hat,

Universally worn.

(54) Sully, vol. i. p. 23.
(55) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 20.
(56) Ibid. p. 39.

"the

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"the other about his neck. When he was ordered "to quit the court of France, by Henry the Third, "whose minions he had insulted and defied, he "besought of me to assure the lady whom he serv- "ed, that those favors would infallibly induce him "to put to death the favorites, who had produced "the affront received by him (57)." It was well known, that the lady in question was the queen of Navarre. Colors were assumed, not only as marks of devotion and gallantry towards the ladies; but, as badges of friendship and adherence. At the judicial combat of Jarnac and La Chataigneraye, the band of gentlemen who were in the interests of the latter nobleman, amounted to five hundred, all habited in his colors, white and red. Those attached to Jarnac, did not exceed a hundred, dressed in white and black (58). On all occasions of danger or glory, lovers never failed to decorate themselves in the colors, or favors, bestowed by the object of their affection (59).

Badges of gallantry, and friendship.

Devices.

The imagination was tortured in the invention of devices, anagrams, and mottos, assumed by persons of both sexes. Margaret, the second queen of Navarre of that name, speaking of her litter, says, "there were, either in the lining, or in the windows "of it, forty different devices, the words of which "were in Spanish or Italian, upon the Sun and its "effects." She had chosen a Sun for her emblem (60). In 1568, Cruffol, one of the Hugonot commanders, upon his standard, caused to be represented a Hydra, all the heads of which were ornamented with the dresses of cardinals, bishops, and monks. He himself, in the character of Hercules, was depictured as employed in their extermination.

(57) Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 404.
(58) Brant. Les Duels, p. 60.
(59) Ibid. vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 316; and vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 402.
(60) Vie de Marg. p. 202. Memoires de Marg. p. 112.

The

The motto, "Qui caſſo, crudeles," and was anagram on his name, Jacques de Cruſſol (61). When Francis the Firſt quitted his miſtreſs, the counteſs de Chateaubriant, and attached himſelf to the ducheſs of Eſtampes, he demanded of the former his "devices," which he had cauſed to be inſcribed, or engraven on all his preſents to her. They were of the invention and compoſition of his ſiſter, Margaret of Valois, and were regarded as the moſt delicate productions of female taſte (62).

Rage for play.

The rage for play may be juſtly reckoned among the characteriſtic features of the age. It was carried to a pernicious height, under the reign of Henry the Third; and tended eminently to produce a general depravity of manners. That monarch eſtabliſhed in the Louvre itſelf, in 1579, a gaming-table for cards and dice, open to all comers, and at which he gave the example of playing conſtantly, in perſon. A company of Italians, who profited of his permiſſion, won from him fifteen thouſand crowns, in the courſe of a month (63). Epernon imitated the model ſet him by his maſter. On the evening previous to his departure for Gaſcony, in 1584, on the embaſſy to the king of Navarre, he loſt above three hundred pounds ſterling, to marſhal Retz (64). The rapid progreſs of ſo deſtructive a vice, may be aſcertained from Brantome. "The parties at tennis," ſays he, "under "Henry the Second, were for one, two, and three "hundred crowns at moſt, even when the king "played himſelf. At preſent, they are for two, "three thouſand, and even double that ſum (65)." Mary of Guiſe, queen-dowager of Scotland, loſt

Examples of it.

(61) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 589.
(62) Brant. vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 455 and 456.
(63) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 105.
(64) Ibid. p. 176.
(65) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 64.

three

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three thouſand crowns, in one evening, to Monſieur d'Eſſe, a French gentleman, then reſident in her court (66). It ſeems to have been her whole ſtock of ready money, as ſhe continued the game, upon honor, without any ſtake. We may ſee the price of a pack of cards, purchaſed at the manufactory itſelf, in Montaigne. He ſays, that in 1581, he paid for ordinary ones, at Thiers, in Auvergne, where they were fabricated, only one ſous, or a halfpenny, the pack. But, for finer ones, they demanded above ſix ſous, or three-pence (67).

Cards.

Theatrical exhibitions.

Theatrical exhibitions began to be known under Henry the Third, as a public diverſion. In February, 1577, a company of Italian comedians, who entitled themſelves "Li Geloſi," and whom that prince had invited from Venice, arrived in France. On their way to the court, they fell into the hands of the Hugonots; and the king, in order to procure their deliverance, was neceſſitated to pay a conſiderable ranſom. They began to perform dramatic pieces, by his permiſſion, in the great hall, uſually appropriated to the convocation of the States General, in the caſtle of Blois, where he then reſided (68). The remónſtrances of the clergy, and of the cardinal of Bourbon himſelf, could not induce Henry to delay the commencement of the comedies, or paſtorals, as they were denominated, till the end of Lent (69). On his return to Paris, in the month of May of the ſame year, the comedians opened a theatre in the palace of Bourbon, near the Louvre, where they renewed their exhibition. It would ſeem, that there was no diſtinction of places, in the theatre allotted to the ſpectators; as the price of all ſeats indiſcriminately was fixed at four

Italian comedians.

(66) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 191.
(67) Voyages de Mont. vol. iii. p. 455.
(68) Mem. pour ſer à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 78.
(69) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 173 and 177.

ſous,

fous, or two-pence. The concourſe of people to partake of ſo novel a ſpecies of entertainment, was immenſe (70). But, in the following month, the Parliament iſſued a prohibition to continue a diverſion, which the magiſtrates conceived to be of a nature extremely injurious to national manners. From this ſentence, the Italians appealed, and preſented the royal letters patent, authorizing them to perform, in defiance of the mandates of Parliament. It was in vain that the preſident and members of that body impoſed a fine of four hundred pounds on the comedians, if they preſumed to obtain or plead the king's ſanction. Henry interpoſed; and, by his expreſs command, the foreigners reſumed and continued their performances, under his immediate protection (71). Nothing can more forcibly prove, how low was the ſtate of the French drama, than the exiſtence of an Italian theatre in the metropolis, at a time that a national one was unknown.

Sustained by the king, againſt the Parliament.

Among the evils, to which anarchy and contempt of the laws had given birth, after the commencement of the civil wars, may be reckoned the practice of counterfeiting the current coin. It is difficult to conceive how univerſal it had become, and to what a degree the money in common circulation was debaſed. Towards the concluſion of Henry the Third's reign, France was inundated with falſe coiners, who ſubſtituted the baſeſt metals, in place of gold and ſilver. Tavannes aſſures us, that gentlemen retained in their caſtles and houſes, perſons ſkilled in the art of fabricating money, whom they dignified with the appellation of philoſophers; and who, after quitting the laboratory, eat at the tables of their employers. He adds, that thoſe gentlemen who only counterfeited dollars and florins, which were German coins, and who abſtained from ſtriking

Counterfeit coin.

Practice, general.

(70) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 79.
(71) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 81 and 82.

French

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French money, regarded themſelves as free from all criminality (72). Salcede, who was put to death in 1582, for having conſpired againſt the State, had merited an exemplary puniſhment by his preceding crimes. Notwithſtanding the penalty annexed to falſifying the coin of the kingdom, which was no leſs than throwing the culprit into boiling oil; he had fabricated ſuch a quantity of baſe money, as to enable him to make with it, the purchaſe of an eſtate (73). It was not till the final termination of the diſſenſions of France, and the reſtoration of vigor in the execution of the laws, that ſo pernicious an abuſe was aboliſhed.

Retainers.

The practice of keeping retainers among the great; one of the moſt powerful ſupports of the feudal ſyſtem, and which the policy or tyranny of the two firſt princes of the houſe of Tudor had totally extinguiſhed in England, continued ſtill to exiſt among the French. It even derived ſtrength, and became more confirmed, from the diſorders of the court and kingdom, under the reigns of the three laſt ſovereigns of Valois. Every nobleman had his followers, whoſe numbers bore a proportion to the power and conſequence of their patron. Tavannes ſays, that at the death of Henry the Second, the conſtable Montmorenci, on his retreat to his own houſe, was abandoned by at leaſt a hundred gentlemen, who had always been accuſtomed to follow in his train (74). The greater number of theſe, ranged themſelves under the protection of the Guiſes, who were then poſſeſſed of authority. We may judge how much the royal dignity was obſcured and enfeebled, by the adherence of ſo many individuals to their reſpective lords, from the relation left us by Brantome. "At the deceaſe of Francis the Second,"

Numbers of them, about the nobility.

The Guiſes.

(72) Tavannes, p. 132 and 133.
(73) Buſbeq. letter 8th.
(74) Tavannes, p. 220.

ſays

ſays he, " I was at Orleans, and was a witneſs to " the devotion of the whole court to the duke of " Guiſe. Seven or eight days after that event, he " went on a pilgrimage to Clery, on foot: he " was accompanied by almoſt all the nobility and " courtiers; the new king remaining nearly " alone, chagrined, and jealous at ſuch a pre- " ference (75)."

Entrance of the duke of Guiſe into Paris.

Even in the following year, 1561, after the duke's retreat from court to his caſtles in Champagne; when, at the earneſt ſolicitation of the queen-mother, he re-appeared at Paris, it was at the head of a band of followers, which impreſſed reſpect and terror. Brantome, who was one of the number, and who attended him to the levee of Charles the Ninth, deſcribes his dreſs, arms, and behaviour on that occaſion. They were ſuch as Sylla, or Cæſar, might have adopted, when entering Rome; and bore no reſemblance to the humility of a ſubject, approaching the foot of the throne. " Beſides his " ſword," adds Brantome, " I ſaw him order three " daggers to be brought into his cloſet, of which " he ſelected the ſharpeſt."——" He was mounted " on a black gennet, and accompanied by three " or four hundred gentlemen (76)." It muſt be confeſſed, that ſo formidable a train ſeemed more calculated to ſhake, than to confirm the crown, on the head of the young king.

Poverty and dependance of the retainers.

Many of theſe unfortunate retainers ſtarved in the ſervice of the princes or grandees, to whom they devoted themſelves. Coconas, who was put to death in 1574, for a ſort of conſpiracy to procure the eſcape of Francis, duke of Anjou; ſays, in his confeſſion, that " he had been eight years a retainer of " the duke, without having ever received from him, " in the courſe of that time, wherewithal to pur-

(75) Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 77. (76) Ibid. p. 85.

" chaſe

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"chaſe himſelf even a hat (77)." Henry the Third became, from the ſovereign of a great people, only the head and chief of a band of gentlemen, who filled the court with continual diſputes, cauſed by their inſolence and temerity. His brother, the duke of Guiſe, and all the principal nobles, had, in like manner, their partizans. It was deemed an object of triumph, to ſeduce thoſe of each other. Epernon, who roſe to ſuch a point of favor and grandeur, towards the end of Henry's reign, was originally in the ſervice of the duke of Anjou; as were Maugiron, Livarot, and others of the minions (78). When a forced reconciliation took place in the royal preſence, between Buſſy d'Amboiſe and a gentleman named St. Fal, in 1577; the former had the audacity to enter the palace of the Louvre itſelf, attended by above two hundred determined and devoted friends. Henry the Third expreſſed his indignation at it; but, did not venture to attempt its repreſſion, or puniſhment. Buſſy even augmented the train of his followers, during his ſtay in the capital, as his beſt protection and ſecurity againſt the vengeance of his ſovereign, whom he braved and defied (79). It was, in fact, the only effectual preſervative from aſſaſſins and murderers (80). We find the duke of Epernon, in 1585, on his ſetting out to viſit the king of Navarre, carrying with him above five hundred gentlemen; and at his appearance before the king, his maſter, at Chartres, after the flight of Henry from Paris, he was ſurrounded by as numerous a band (81). The great nobles became almoſt independant of the crown, and maintained each, a ſort of ſeparate court, protected by their armed fol-

Their inſolence.

Buſſy d'Amboiſe.

Epernon.

(77) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 371.
(78) Vie de Marg. p. 232.
(79) Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 399 and 400.
(80) Vie de Marg. p. 166.
(81) Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 86 and 198.

lowers.

lowers. In 1588, the duke of Nevers offered to arm, and pay one hundred gentlemen, at his own expence, for three years, to ſerve againſt the Proteſtants (82). Henry the Third was equally incapable of carrying on war with vigor, or of ſupporting his own authority in time of peace. CHAP. VI.

The treachery and violation of faith which characterized the age, gave birth to a race of men who infeſted ſociety, and who derived a ſubſiſtence from betraying the ſecrets of thoſe with whom they lived. Spies became one of the principal engines of ſtate, under Catherine of Medicis; and ſhe expended conſiderable ſums for their maintenance about the perſons of all thoſe whom ſhe diſtruſted. So pernicious an invention tended eminently to deſtroy mutual confidence, friendſhip, and fidelity. We find that no rank, birth, or ſituation, elevated the poſſeſſor above aſſuming the odious office of a ſpy. Bellegarde, a marſhal of France, condeſcended to act the part of one, about Damville, at the perſuaſion of the court (83). The queen-dowager uſually retained in her immediate pay, from twenty to thirty; all of whom were, as might be naturally expected, the moſt depraved and abandoned of mankind (84). She even entertained them in the houſehold of her own ſons; and Coſmo Ruggieri, a Florentine, who pretended to a knowledge of magic, ſerved her in that capacity, near the duke of Alençon. He betrayed her to the duke, divulged all her ſecrets, and was involved in the conſpiracy of la Mole and Coconas, in 1574 (85). Charles the Ninth employed a lady of the queen of Navarre, to watch her actions, and received from her a regular information of his ſiſter's conduct. Many of

Spies. Their numbers.

Ruggieri.

(82) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 75.
(83) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 528.
(84) D'Aub. Memoires, p. 45.
(85) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 376.

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the original letters, addreſſed by her to the king, are yet preſerved (86). Margaret informs us, that ſhe herſelf, at the preſſing ſolicitation of her brother, the duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry the Third; undertook, and executed the employment of a confidential ſpy over her mother and Charles the Ninth. It ought not to be forgotten, that when ſhe accepted the taſk, ſhe had ſcarcely completed her ſeventeenth year (87). Nor were theſe agents of a perfidious and unprincipled policy, confined to France. All the courts and cabinets of Europe were filled with the emiſſaries of Catherine and Henry the Third. In 1574, we find her writing to the French embaſſador in England, enjoining him to ſend over a ſpy, named Jannoton, to the camp of the prince of Orange, in Flanders; and ſpecifying his annual appointments, which were fixed at twelve hundred livres (88). It appears from the letters of the king to the ſame miniſter, in 1577, that he maintained numbers of ſecret agents and penſioners in the court of Elizabeth (89).

Margaret of Valois.

Foreign ſpies.

Duels.

Frequency of them.

One of the greateſt ſcourges of the time, was the rage for duels, which prevailed univerſally among the men of quality and condition. The continual practice of arms, the facility of obtaining pardon, and the debility of the laws, carried the evil to its utmoſt height. La Noue declares, that if a calculation had been made of the number of gentlemen who periſhed every year in theſe encounters; it would be found, that many battles had been fought, with leſs effuſion of generous blood (90). Under the predeceſſors of Henry the Third, duels, however frequent, or fatal, were, at leaſt, limited to the

(86) Depôt de Bethune, Manuſ. 8676, cited in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. p. 102.
(87) Vie de Marg. p. 18—22.
(88) About fifty pounds. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 419.
(89) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 508.
(90) La Noue, Douzieme Diſ. p. 244.

two

two perſons between whom cauſe of quarrel had ariſen. But, during his reign, originated the mode of involving in the effects of the diſpute, the ſeconds and friends on either ſide. The firſt introduction of ſo abſurd and deſtructive a cuſtom, was exhibited in the memorable duel between Quelus and Entragues, in 1578. The former gentleman repaired to the place of action, near the Baſtile, attended by two others of the royal minions, Maugiron and Livarot. With Entragues, came Schomberg and Riberac. "Theſe ſix champions," ſays De Thou, "met at break of day, and engaged in "deep ſilence (91)." Four of the ſix expired either on the ſpot, or, in a few days afterwards. They wore no defenſive arms, and fought with the ſword and dagger. Brantome, who has left us a minute relation of the event, compares it to the combat of the Horatii, and the Curiatii, in the fabulous ages of Rome and Alba. He aſſerts, that Entragues, who killed his antagoniſt Quelus; and who alone of the two ſurvivors, eſcaped unwounded, owed his advantage and preſervation to the circumſtance of having armed himſelf with a dagger; whereas his adverſary was deſtitute of any weapon, except the ſword (92). Inſtead of exerting the force of the laws, to repreſs and puniſh ſo audacious an infraction of them, in his own capital; the king abandoned himſelf to the emotions of grief for the loſs of his favorites (93).

Seconds.

Quelus and Entragues.

Impunity of duels.

This extraordinary combat was not the only one of its kind, which diſtinguiſhed the period before us. Biron, ſon to the firſt marſhal of that name, and who ſuffered capital puniſhment for his treaſonable conſpiracies, in the beginning of the ſeven-

Biron, and

(91) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 726.
(92) Brant. Les Duels, p. 99—101.
(93) L'Etoile, p. 28. Brant. Les Duels, ibid.

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teenth century; fought, at an early period of his life, a similar duel with the prince of Carency. Two seconds, on either side, who not only were completely unconnected with the dispute between the principals; but, who were intimately acquainted, and in habits of general friendship; joined in the fray, and betrayed equal animosity. We may judge of the mutual fury which animated them, when we find that they met at day-light, in the midst of a storm of snow, which drove with so much violence as almost to intercept the sight. The precautions taken by them to prevent a discovery, were such, that they had no spectators, except some accidental passengers. Biron and his two seconds having, with great address, taken their ground in a manner to avail themselves of the snow, which was driven in the faces of their adversaries, laid them all three dead on the ground. No legal proceeding or prosecution, seems to have been instituted against the victorious survivors (94). The slightest causes; a word, carelessly or unguardedly uttered, a look, or a gesture, were sufficient to produce a challenge. No age or rank exempted from their acceptance. La Chasnaye, who was killed by Sourdiac, in a duel, under Henry the Second, was eighty years old (95). To prevent every kind of deceit, and to obviate the suspicion of wearing concealed armor, it was customary to fight in their shirts only. In 1579, Bussy d'Amboise, and Angeau, for a trifling difference, fought two gentlemen, at Alençon: they were all four destitute of any dress, except shirts (96).

Carency.

Circumstances of that duel.

Other instances.

History of Vitaux.

The most formidable duellist of the age, was the Baron de Vitaux. He was equally dexterous, expe-

(94) De Thou, vol. ix. p. 592 and 593. Brant. Les Duels, p. 102—104. La Noue, p. 246 and 247.

(95) Brant. Les Duels, p. 259—261.

(96) Mem. pour ser. à l'Hist. de Fra. p. 105.

rienced,

rienced, and intrepid. Numbers of gentlemen, in every part of France, had fallen victims to his ſuperior ſkill. His vengeance knew no limit; and even Henry the Third trembled at the proweſs and deſperate reſolution of one of his own ſubjects (97). His renown was ſuch, that it ſpread over all Europe; and foreigners who viſited France, were anxious to ſee a champion ſo fortunate and celebrated (98). After having been compelled to fly into Italy, in order to eſcape the puniſhment ready to be inflicted on him for the various lives which he had deſtroyed; he ventured to return to Paris, in 1573, on a new project of revenge. To facilitate it, he lay concealed, ſuffered his beard to grow to an unuſual length, and put on the diſguiſe of a lawyer. Millaud, a gentleman, who had murdered the baron's brother, was then reſident in the metropolis. Vitaux, accompanied by two brothers of the name of Boucicaut, who were called his lions; watched the moment when his enemy was paſſing through one of the principal ſtreets, attended by five or ſix men; attacked him, left him dead on the ſpot, and eſcaped. He was taken and confined; but, by the powerful interceſſion of his friends, obtained a pardon (99). Ten years afterwards, the ſon of Millaud, who had attained to manhood, and who nouriſhed an ardent deſire to avenge his father's death, demanded reparation of Vitaux. They met, without the walls of Paris, naked in their ſhirts only, armed with a ſword and a poniard. There the baron, abandoned by his good fortune, and rendered careleſs, by his contempt for ſo young an adverſary, received a mortal wound, and expired immediately (100).

His exploits,

and death.

(97) Buſbeq. letter 22, p 140.
(98) Brant. Les Duels, p. 119.
(99) Ibid. p. 120—124.
(100) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 165. Brant. Les Duels, p. 116—118. Buſbeq. p. 138—141.

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Rage for duels.

It is in the Memoirs of d'Aubigné, that we may ſee in the ſtrongeſt colors, the extravagancies and acts of temerity, by which the gentlemen of his time were characterized. They cheerfully incurred the greateſt expences, and made the longeſt and moſt toilſome journeys, in order to meet in their ſhirts, and decide their differences with the ſword. D'Aubigné rode from the vicinity of Orleans, to Caſtelgeloux in Gaſcony, acroſs half of France, to fight la Magdelaine; with whom his chief reaſon for quarrelling, appears to have been, on account of the reputation acquired by the latter. La Magdelaine had diſpatched eight gentlemen in ſingle combat, without loſing a drop of blood. This paſſion for duels, by one of the inconſiſtencies ſo common in human nature, was not incompatible with fervent piety. D'Aubigné, on the point of meeting la Magdelaine, ſays, that he roſe early, and prayed devoutly to God. It is certain, that his inflexible adherence to his religious principles and profeſſions, was highly injurious to his fortune and elevation in life (101).

Mixture of religion and revenge.

Under Francis the Firſt, duels were comparatively unknown: the manners of the nation, more ſimple, were far more pure; and the royal authority, ſuſtaining the laws, repreſſed the licentiouſneſs which afterwards grew under three reigns of minority, conſpiracies, and civil war (102). Some weak, and ineffectual efforts, to ſet limits to ſo pernicious a practice, were made by Henry the Third, in 1579; but, as they were rather calculated for reconciling, than for puniſhing the parties engaged in quarrels, little advantage accrued from the attempt (103). In 1588, at the convocation of the States by Henry

(101) D'Aub. Memoires, p. 75—77.
(102) La Noue, p. 244 and 245. Brant. Les Duels, p. 182.
(103) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 608.

the

the Third, Montholon, keeper of the ſeals, in his ſpeech to the aſſembly, enumerating the national evils that called for redreſs; inſiſted ſtrongly upon the impiety and deſtructive conſequences of the practice of duelling. But, no meaſures were taken to produce a reformation, or to puniſh thoſe who perſiſted in the open infraction of the laws (104). CHAP. VI. Supineneſs of government.

The gratification of revenge, one of the ſtrongeſt paſſions of the human mind, when not controlled by the terror of puniſhment; was not even reſtrained in every inſtance, by the finer ties of honor. Aſſaſſination and murder, tacitly, if not openly ſanctioned by the ſovereign, exhibited ſcenes of horror, over which, from their publicity, it is not poſſible to draw a veil, and the bare narration of which excites equal abhorrence and incredulity. It is one of the moſt hideous, as it is one of the moſt prominent features of the time under our contemplation. We are only at a loſs, in the multitude of facts which preſent themſelves, to ſelect thoſe, calculated to depicture the ſpirit and temper of the age in its ſtrongeſt point of view. Can we, in fact, be ſurprized that individuals ſhould gratify their reſentment, jealouſy, or hatred, without limit, when we know that Charles the Ninth, encouraged, and employed aſſaſſins (105)? Catherine of Medicis, and her ſon, the duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry the Third; did not heſitate to ſuborn, and to inſtruct Maurevel, who, under their immediate directions, aimed the balls at Coligni, by which he was wounded, in 1572, previous to the maſſacre of Paris. Five thouſand crowns were ſtipulated as the reward for the aſſaſſination of the admiral, which Maurevel undertook, ſome years earlier, at the perſonal ſolicitation of Charles the Ninth himſelf. Unable to find Aſſaſſinations. Maurevel.

(104) De Thou, vol. x p. 386. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 92.
(105) Vie de Marg. p. 31 and 48.

a favora-

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a favorable occaſion for his purpoſe, and continually baffled by the precautions which Coligni took for his ſecurity; he determined to merit the protection of the court, by a ſervice of importance, though of inferior magnitude. Having joined the Hugonot army, he was there received, and protected by Vaudré, Sieur de Mouy, one of the braveſt and moſt diſtinguiſhed officers of the Proteſtant forces. That generous and unſuſpecting friend divided with Maurevel, his bed, his table, and his purſe. But, ſo many acts of hoſpitality and affection neither made an impreſſion on him, nor delayed the execution of his deſign. Having availed himſelf of the ſame opportunity which enabled Martialis to ſtab Caracalla, he fired a piſtol-ball into his benefactor's reins, and immediately effected his eſcape to the Catholics, mounted on a horſe which Mouy had preſented him. The moſt debaſed and depraved period of the Byzantine annals, when human nature ſeems to have ſunk to the loweſt ebb of degradation, ſcarcely preſents features more horrid, than the reigns of the laſt princes of Valois (106).

Aſſaſſins employed by ſovereign princes.

In the extraordinary confeſſion made by Henry the Third, when king of Poland, to one of his confidents, at Cracow, relative to the cauſes of the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, which is preſerved in the Memoirs of Villeroy; we read with amazement, that he himſelf, having cauſed to be brought into his preſence a Gaſcon officer, addreſſed him in theſe words: "Captain, the queen my mother and I "have ſelected you from among all our good ſer- "vants, as a man of valor and courage, proper to "conduct and execute an enterprize which we me- "ditate: it only conſiſts in directing a determined

Confeſſion of Henry the Third.

(106) Memoires de l'Etat de France, ſous Charles 9me. tome ii. p. 32. Confeſſion de Sancy, p. 511—513.

"blow

" blow at a perſon whom we will name to you. CHAP.
" Conſider, therefore, whether you have the bold- VI.
" neſs to undertake it. Favor, and means, ſhall
" not be wanting; and, beſides, a recompence
" worthy the moſt ſignal ſervice which can be ren-
" dered us (107)." Maurevel was, notwithſtand- Reflections on it.
ing, afterwards, preferred, as a more cool, and tried aſſaſſin. The relation of Henry's converſation with the Gaſcon captain, is, perhaps, the only authentic record of ſuch a propoſition, made by a ſovereign to an individual, preſerved in modern hiſtory. Its enormity is augmented, when we conſider that Catherine of Medicis was preſent at, and a party to ſo deteſtable a machination. It ſeems ſcarcely poſſible to carry further, depravity and crime. The king of Navarre, when examined before the queen-dowager, and the council of ſtate, aſſembled in the Louvre, on the 18th of April, 1574, declared, that he had received certain information of the king of Poland's having ordered du Gua, to kill him at all events (108).

We find that Charles the Ninth, in 1570, when Duke of Guiſe.
irritated at the duke of Guiſe's pretenſions to the hand of his ſiſter, Margaret of Valois, ordered his natural brother, the count of Angouleme, to be called, and ſaid to him: " Of thoſe two ſwords
" which thou ſeeſt before thee, one is deſtined for
" thy own execution, if to-morrow, when I go to
" the chace, thou doſt not ſtab the duke of Guiſe."
The count cheerfully undertook the employment; but, he had not the courage requiſite for its execution; and the duke, by retiring from court, averted the fury of the king (109). Lignerolles, a gentleman of the Lignerolles.
houſehold of the duke of Anjou, whoſe only crime was

(107) " Diſcours d'Henry III. à un Perſonnage d'Honneur," in the ſecond volume of the Memoires de Villeroy, p. 59—66.
(108) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 373.
(109) Vie de Marg. p. 31.

that

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that of having been entrusted by his master, with the destructive intentions of Charles the Ninth respecting the Hugonots; was murdered in open day, by the command of his own sovereign, while on a party of amusement (110). Even when expiring, in 1574, that ferocious prince, with the advice and approbation of his mother, dispatched two famous assassins, St. Martin and Maurevel, into Poitou, on the specific commission to murder La Noue, one of the Protestant leaders, who had survived the carnage of St. Bartholomew (111). Brantome owns, that Maurevel was commonly designed by the appellation of "Le Tueur du Roi;" the king's murderer (112).

Encouragement, given by Henry the third to crimes.

Henry the Third, become king of France by the decease of Charles the Ninth, though less furious in his rage, was not restrained by any sentiments of virtue, or by any principles of honor. The most enormous crimes found not only protection, but, encouragement from a monarch, abandoned to dissolute pleasures, and corrupted by examples the most flagitious. If he did not, like his brother, command, he secretly instigated, to their commission.

Instances.

The count of Montsoreau, who assassinated Bussy d'Amboise in 1579, was indirectly exhorted to revenge himself. The most complete impunity followed the perpetration of the murder (113). Some years before, he had sent a detachment of his own guards, to seize, and drown Madame de Thorigny, a lady belonging to the court of his sister, the queen of Navarre. She was rescued from the hands of the assassins, at the instant when, having bound her,

(110) Vie de Marg. p. 31.
(111) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 55.
(112) Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 165.
(113) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 90. L'Etoile, p. 37—39. Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 498.

they

they were about to fulfil their orders (114). To the generous delays and expoſtulations, interpoſed by Souvré, it was owing, that the order, iſſued by Henry, in 1575, to ſtrangle the marſhals Montmorenci and Coſſé, then priſoners in the Baſtile, was not inſtantly executed (115). CHAP. VI.

Henry the Third received poſitive information, that his own brother, the duke of Alençon, had attempted to deſtroy him, ſoliciting his valet to ſcratch him on the nape of the neck with a poiſoned pin, at the time when he was adjuſting the king's ruff (116). Being ſoon afterwards ſuddenly ſeized with a violent and acute pain in his ear; and doubting, that it proceeded from poiſon adminiſtered by his brother's order, or with his approbation; Henry, in a paroxiſm of rage, commanded the king of Navarre, who was afterwards Henry the Fourth, to put Alençon to death. But, that generous and magnanimous prince, refuſed to execute the commiſſion, though it would have removed the only obſtacle to his eventually aſcending the throne of France. Henry the Third ſpeedily recovered; but, his deteſtation of the ſuppoſed author of his late attack, remained too deeply rooted, to be ever eradicated. Of theſe particulars, it is not poſſible to doubt, becauſe they depend on the teſtimony of Henry the Fourth himſelf, whoſe veracity was never impeached, even by his enemies. They convey a faithful, though a diſguſting picture, of the manners of that age (117). The accuſation of poiſon was ſoon afterwards retorted on the king, by his brother (118). Eteocles and Polynices, in the Theban hiſtory, were not inflamed with a more inextinguiſh-

(114) Vie de Marg. p. 160.
(115) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 292. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 81, 82.
(116) Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 79.
(117) Ibid. p. 79—81. (118) Ibid. p. 106, 107.

able

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able antipathy and animosity towards each other, than were Henry the Third, and the duke of Alençon.

Chiverny.

The chancellor Chiverny assures us, that in 1575, the duke of Alençon gave directions to one of his most confidential captains, to assassinate him on the road from Paris to Chatelherault in Poitou: he adds, that he owed his life to the accidental circumstance of the murderer arriving too late to execute the commission (119). It is not the only instance which might be produced, of that prince's guilt and criminal intentions. Even parricide did not restrain him, when irritated, or incensed. Catherine of Medicis, his own mother, declared to the cardinal of Bourbon, that she feared to approach her son's bed, on the night when La Mole, his favorite, was executed, lest he should plunge a dagger in her breast (120). He was surpassed in atrocity, by his sister, Margaret of Valois. De Thou positively asserts, that she persuaded and induced, by her eloquence, the celebrated baron de Vitaux to perpetrate the murder of du Gua, the favorite of Henry the Third, in 1575.——The crime was rendered more detestable, from the cruelty with which it was accompanied. Du Gua, unarmed, and employed in reading in his bed, fell an easy victim to the vengeance of his implacable enemy (121). It is a circumstance which ought not to be omitted, because it paints in all its horror, the savage spirit of the times; that, the murderer having executed the object of his commission, was descending the staircase, in order to effect his escape, when he was met by a lady, who lived in a criminal intimacy with du Gua. He had the barbarity to

Du Gua. His murder.

(119) Memoires de Chiverny, vol. i. p. 63.
(120) Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 177.
(121) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 300—302.

wipe

wipe his ſword, ſtill reeking with the blood of her lover, on the apron of the unfortunate miſtreſs (122). CHAP. VI.

Even though we ſhould incline to acquit the queen of Navarre of having inſtigated the aſſaſſination of du Gua; it is not poſſible to doubt of her having ſent perſons to murder a meſſenger of Henry the Third, who was on his way to Rome, with diſpatches from the king to his favorite, Joyeuſe, in 1583 (123). Indignant at ſo audacious an enterprize, executed upon a royal courier, Henry drove her from his court and capital, with public marks of ignominy. But, her future life was diſtinguiſhed, even to a late period, by a repetition of ſimilar enormities. Such was the contagion of the times, that even Henry the Fourth himſelf was not, it would ſeem, entirely free from its influence. He is accuſed, though perhaps unjuſtly, of having propoſed to the duke of Alençon to ſtrangle Catherine of Medicis, in the Louvre, with their own hands. This propoſition is ſaid to have been made in 1574, at a time when the two parties regarded their own execution as imminent, on account of La Mole's conſpiracy (124). D'Aubigné aſſerts, that the king of Navarre, incenſed againſt him for the freedom of his remonſtrances, embraced the reſolution of cauſing him to be poignarded, and thrown into the river Gave, at Pau. If there be no exaggeration in theſe facts, it may ſerve to prove how univerſal was the depravity of manners, and how difficult it was to eſcape the infection (125).

Enormities of the queen of Navarre.

Henry the Fourth.

In 1578, St. Megrin, one of the minions of Henry the Third, was attacked and murdered, cloſe to the

St. Megrin.

(122) Vie de Marg. p. 165—169. Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 106—109.
(123) Vie de Marg. p. 342. Buſbeq. letter 22. p. 135.
(124) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 352.
(125) D'Aub. Mem. p. 62 and 63.

palace

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palace of the Louvre, by a band of aſſaſſins, whom the duke of Guiſe had employed to revenge the honor of his bed, which it was ſuppoſed St. Megrin had attempted with ſucceſs. The duke of Mayenne did not heſitate to put himſelf at the head of this troop of ruffians, and to lend his perſonal aſſiſtance in ſo foul a tranſaction (126). Some years afterwards, in 1587, he committed an act ſtill more deteſtable, by ſtabbing Sacremore, one of his own officers and adherents, who demanded with too much warmth, the reward promiſed to his long and faithful ſervices (127). Wherever we turn our view, we find only ſimilar crimes, and ſimilar impunity.

Sacremore.

Ornano. His Hiſtory, and Crimes.

It cannot excite ſurprize, that the nobility and people ſhould imitate the example of the ſovereign. San Pietro Ornano, a Corſican in the ſervice of France, equally renowned for his courage and his brutality; having married a Genoeſe lady of quality, whoſe rank was not inferior to her virtue, put her to death, on a pretext the moſt unjuſt. Approaching her with every external demonſtration of reſpect and humility; after entreating her pardon on his knee, he deliberately applied the cord to her neck, and ſtrangled her with his own hands. Quitting Marſeilles, where he had committed the act, he arrived at court; diſplayed his breaſt, covered with ſcars and wounds received in battle; treated the murder as a private tranſaction, with which public juſtice had no concern; and obtained his pardon from Charles the Ninth (128). During the reſidence of Henry the Third at the caſtle of Poitiers, in 1577, a ſcene, if poſſible, ſtill more inhuman, was acted. The count de Villequier, firſt gentleman of

Villequier.

(126) L'Etoile, p. 30 and 31..

(127) Lettre d'Henry IV. in the tenth vol. of Voltaire, p. 231. L'Etoile, p. 106.

(128) A'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 231.

the king's bed-chamber, and who had been his governor; having received information of his wife's infidelity, ſtabbed her at her toilet, while ſhe embraced his knees, and ſupplicated forgiveneſs. The crime was conſidered as peculiarly indecent, from the circumſtance of its having been committed in the perſonal reſidence of the ſovereign; and no leſs deteſtable, as the unfortunate counteſs was far advanced in her pregnancy. Villequier obtained not only his immediate pardon; but, the king was accuſed of having inſtigated, or, at leaſt, approved of the murder (129). In the long liſt of aſſaſſinations, with which the annals of that prince's reign are crouded; we find ſcarcely a ſingle inſtance of the criminal being brought to juſtice, except in the ſolitary one of La Bobettiere, a Hugonot gentleman of Poitou, who was beheaded in 1579, for having put to death his wife and her lover, with circumſtances of peculiar treachery and malignity. He was beheaded in the Place de Greve, at Paris (130). Thoſe who were not even ſecure of impunity and pardon in the court of France, found an aſylum in that of Navarre. In 1578, Laverdin having killed his rival in cold blood, was received with open arms, at Nerac (131).

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Impunity of murders.

La Bobettiere.

A crime, if poſſible, ſtill more odious, though from its nature and ſymptoms, more ambiguous and equivocal, followed in the train of aſſaſſination. Poiſon began to be known, and even to be ſtudied as a ſcience, after the commencement of the civil wars. It would be endleſs to enumerate the perſons of the higheſt condition and quality, ſuppoſed to have periſhed by this means, between the acceſſion of Francis the Second, and the concluſion of the reign

Poiſon.

(129) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 749. Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 82 and 83. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 756—758.

(130) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 107 and 108.

(131) Ibid. p. 93.

of

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of Henry the Third. Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre; Charles the Ninth; the prince of Condé; Mary of Cleves; the cardinal of Lorrain; Francis, duke of Alençon; Henry, prince of Condé; marſhal Bellegarde; and a number of other illuſtrious perſonages, were believed by their contemporaries, to have been diſpatched by poiſon. Malignity and credulity invented, or exaggerated, the ſymptoms of their diſeaſes, in the majority of theſe inſtances. Counterpoiſons, preſervatives, and antidotes, were eagerly ſought after by the great, and commonly vended by the needy, or the profligate. The Bezoar ſtone was long believed to poſſeſs the virtue of expelling, or counteracting the moſt violent poiſons. Paré was among the firſt, who expoſed and confuted that pretenſion, by cauſing the Bezoar ſtone to be applied, and adminiſtered internally to a criminal, who had previouſly ſwallowed a doſe of ſublimate. The experiment was made at Clermont, in Auvergne, by order of Charles the Ninth, in 1565, to whom a Spaniſh nobleman had brought a Bezoar ſtone. The unfortunate culprit, already ſentenced to die, gladly accepted the commutation of his puniſhment, in order to produre a chance of life. The antidote was given him almoſt immediately after the poiſon; but, ineffectually. He expired, within ſeven hours, in violent agonies; and the king, convinced by ſo inconteſtable a proof, of the inefficacy of the medicine, commanded it to be thrown into the fire (132).

Magic.

The credulity of the age gave encouragement to numbers of perſons who pretended to a knowledge of magic and judicial aſtrology. The art was even reduced to rules, and privately taught as a branch

Study of it.

of education. D'Aubigné informs us, that while at Lyons, in 1565, being then about fifteen years

(132) Œuvres de Paré, p. 506, 507.

old,

old, he applied to mathematics, and to the firſt elements of magic, though with a reſolution never to avail himſelf of the latter (133). It is difficult to gueſs what he means by "the firſt elements of "magic:" they are certainly unknown in the preſent times. Ambroſe Paré, though one of the moſt enlightened men of the age in which he lived, and ſuperior to many of the vulgar ſuperſtitions, then received; yet, expreſsly admits the exiſtence of magic, and the invention of evil ſpirits. He claſſes the magicians under their reſpective heads, enumerates many inſtances of their communication with demons; and in particular, one, to which he was an eye-witneſs, in the preſence of Charles the Ninth. Theſe facts tend to prove how widely diffuſed, and how univerſal was that belief, in the ſixteenth century (134). Coſmo Ruggieri, the celebrated Florentine, who was ſentenced to work in the gallies, for his participation in the plot of 1574; if he did not obtain his liberty, drew, at leaſt, to himſelf, the utmoſt conſideration and reſpect, from his ſuppoſed acquaintance with magical ſecrets. Inſtead of being, like his companions, chained to the oar, he was permitted to enjoy his freedom, with only a guard of honor; and even to open a ſort of academy for judicial aſtrology in Marſeilles, which attracted pupils of every deſcription (135). Catherine of Medicis, from her anxiety to penetrate into futurity, or to ward off imaginary dangers, extended her protection to every pretender to occult and ſupernatural powers. The capital, and the kingdom, were inundated with them; and their credit eclipſed that of the wiſeſt, or moſt pious theologians. They were ſaid to amount, in 1572, to thirty thouſand (136).

Ruggieri.

Numbers of pretenders to ſkill in magic.

(133) Memoires de d'Aub. p. 17.
(134) Œuvres de Paré, p. 673.
(135) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 377.
(136) L'Etoile, p. 98. La Noue, p. 9.

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Cabaliſtical words.

Cabaliſtical words, or characters, were commonly worn, as preſervatives againſt ſickneſs or attack (137). Medals, of magical virtue to produce, or, to preſerve friendſhip, were equally ſuppoſed to exiſt. We find la Mole, the favorite of the duke of Alençon, conſtantly wearing one, which he was aſſured would perpetuate the affection of his maſter (138).

Charms uſed in ſurgery.

Medicine and ſurgery, profeſſions which do not ſeem to have any connexion with magic, were not leſs open to its ſuppoſed influence. "My brother," ſays Brantome, "was wounded at the ſiege of Metz, "with three balls, two in the neck, and one in the "arm; of which he would probably have died, if "it had not been for the aid of Doublet, the duke "of Nemours' ſurgeon. He was regarded as the "moſt expert practitioner in France, and every one "had recourſe to him, notwithſtanding that Am- "broſe Paré, ſo celebrated ſince, was then in Metz. "Doublet performed all his cures with only band- "ages of clean linen, and plain water: but, to "thoſe he added ſorceries, and charmed words, as "numbers of perſons now alive, who ſaw him, can "affirm (139)." When Francis, duke of Guiſe, lay without hope of life, in the royal camp before Orleans, from the conſequences of the wound inflicted by Meré Poltrot; St. Juſt d'Alegre, as Brantome informs us, undertook and offered to effect his recovery. He was brought to the duke, and propoſed to begin his dreſſings; which conſiſted in applications preciſely ſimilar to thoſe of Doublet. But, the duke, conſcious that he was beyond the reach of art, refuſed to have recourſe to an expedient which he regarded as impious. He did not, by any

Death of Francis, duke of Guiſe.

(137) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 284.
(138) Ibid. vol. ii. p. 377.
(139) Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 324 and 325.

means,

means, despise, or call in question the ability of d'Alegre to restore him by the help of magic: he only expressed his readiness rather to die, if such was the will of God, than to prolong his life by enchantments. Brantome declares, that he was present at the circumstance (140). In 1582, Sancho d'Avila, one of the most renowned captains of the sixteenth century, died of a wound, which might have been easily healed by skilful applications. But, having had recourse to charms and sorcery, he fell into a languishing disease, of which he expired (141). CHAP. VI. D'Avila.

Ambrose Paré relates many similar instances to which he was a witness, and which he exposed to public derision, in the manner that such impostures merited. During the siege of Metz, in 1552, he was sent to visit a gentleman, whose leg had been fractured by a cannon ball. "I found him," says Paré, "in bed, his leg crooked and bent, without "any dressing on it, because a person had promised "to cure him, only by using certain words, taking "his name and belt. He had lain during four days "in exquisite pain, neither sleeping by day or night, "crying piteously. I laughed at the pretended "mode of cure, and immediately dressed his leg. "He recovered, and is now alive (142)." The most curious recital of this kind, is to be found in another part of Paré's works. "At the siege of Hesdin, in 1553, the count de Martigues, a nobleman of the highest distinction, received a ball in the lungs, of which he languished, with mortal symptoms. Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy, who commanded the Spanish forces, exerted every endeavour to prolong his life, and caused him to be at- Count of Martigues.

(140) Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 113 and 114.
(141) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 599.
(142) Œuvres de Paré, p. 787.

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tended by the moſt eminent ſurgeons of the two armies, after the ſurrender of Heſdin. But, the wound was incurable. When it had been ſo pronounced by Paré, and all the other practitioners, a Spaniard preſented himſelf, and engaged, on pain of death, to operate his recovery, provided that neither ſurgeon, apothecary, nor phyſician, were permitted to approach his patient. They were inſtantly diſmiſſed; and the duke of Savoy ſent a gentleman to notify to Paré, that, as he valued his own life, he ſhould not preſume to interfere further with the count de Martigues. He gladly obeyed; conſcious that no efforts of art could effect the cure. The Spaniard, then advancing, thus addreſſed his patient: "My Lord, the duke of Savoy has commanded "me to come and dreſs thy wound. I ſwear to "thee, by God, that, within eight days, I will en- "able thee to mount on horſeback, lance in hand; "provided no other perſon approach thee, except
Mode, uſed for his cure.
"myſelf. Thou ſhalt eat and drink every thing "which is to thy taſte: I will perform abſtinence "for thee; and of this, thou mayeſt be aſſured, on "my promiſe. I have cured many, who had worſe "wounds than thine." The noblemen preſent, anſwered: "May God give thee grace!" He then deſired to have a ſhirt of the count de Martigues, which he tore into little ſhreds, in form of croſſes, mumbling, and muttering certain words upon the wounds. Having dreſſed them, the Spaniard permitted him to eat and drink whatever he choſe; repeating, that he would obſerve the requiſite regimen in his ſtead. He did ſo, only eating ſix ſmall plumbs, and ſix bits of bread at his meals, and drinking ſimply beer. Nevertheleſs, two days
His death.
afterwards, count Martigues died; and the Spaniard, ſeeing him in the agony, made off with the utmoſt expedition. I believe, if he had been

been caught, the duke of Savoy would have ordered him to be ſtrangled (143)." Nothing can more ſtrongly diſplay the ignorance, credulity, and unacquaintance of the age with the principles of medicine, than their committing to bold and obſcure empirics, the care of perſons in extremity, when abandoned as hopeleſs by regular practitioners.

During the ſiege of Jametz by the duke of Lorrain, in 1588, almoſt all the priſoners who fell into the governor's hands, were found to have about their bodies, cabaliſtical words, or prayers, written on vellum. They were believed to poſſeſs the virtue of protecting the wearer from wounds, or ſhot (144).

Brantome ſays, that he had known an infinite number of perſons, who were ſuch charms: "with "ſome," adds he, "they ſucceeded; with others, "they had no effect (145)." As there were protecting, ſo there were deſtructive charms. Small waxen images, pricked, or pierced about the heart, with magical words and ceremonies, were ſuppoſed to produce death. Such having been found in the houſe of la Mole, which, it was aſſerted, he had procured from Ruggieri, in order to accelerate the progreſs and final effect of the diſeaſe, under which Charles the Ninth laboured; the unfortunate culprit did not deny, that they were magical images: but, he maintained, that their virtue was to excite love, and not to deſtroy life. He appealed to the teſtimony of the figures themſelves, which were female; and proteſted his innocence. The court did not the leſs condemn him to expiate his imprudence on a ſcaffold (146).

Deſtructive charms. Waxen images.

During the frenzy of the Pariſians, and their hatred againſt Henry the Third, after the aſſaſſination

(143) Œuvres de Paré, p. 792.
(144) De Thou vol. x. p. 226.
(145) Brant. Les Duels, p. 90. Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 73—75.
(146) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 378 and 379.

of

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of the Guiſes, in 1589; they had recourſe to ſorcery, in order to rid themſelves of a prince, whom they conſidered as a tyrant. Their profane and impious rage was ſo great, that even the prieſts did not ſcruple to place upon the altars images, which, at every maſs, they pricked; accompanied with incantations and invocations to deſtroy the king. Magical torches were extinguiſhed, with ſimilar ceremonies (147). The chiefs of the League employed a more effectual inſtrument; the knife of Clement. Such was the credulity of the populace, that two candleſticks of coſtly workmanſhip, and ornamented with the figures of ſatyrs, which had belonged to Henry, were produced and ſhewn to the audience by one of the popular preachers, as the demons whom he was accuſtomed to invoke. The impoſture, however groſs, was not leſs ſucceſsful (148). So much had the licentiouſneſs of the times produced impunity, that ſorcery became, under the two laſt princes of Valois, a profeſſion, exerciſed without apprehenſion or diſguiſe. We find, notwithſtanding, that, in 1587, an Italian, named Dominique Miraille, ſeventy years of age, and his mother-in-law, were hanged, and their bodies conſumed to aſhes, before the church of "Notre Dame," at Paris, for the pretended crime of magic. The puniſhment excited aſtoniſhment, not from its injuſtice or abſurdity, but, becauſe it was novel and ſingular (149).

Magical torches.

Credulity of the Pariſians.

Horoſcopes. Horoſcopes, and calculations of nativity, were ſo common, that it was uſual to draw them on the birth of all princes and ſovereigns. The predictions of Michael of Salon, known more univerſally, under the name of Noſtradamus; were peculiarly celebrated in the ſixteenth century. They were read

Calculations of Noſtradamus.

(147) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 270.
(148) Ibid. p. 272 and 273. (149) Ibid. p. 218.

and

and ſtudied with the moſt implicit credulity; and as, like all oracular writings, they were couched in dark and ambiguous expreſſions, men ſaw, or fancied that they ſaw in them, every event which afterwards took place. Jerome Cardan, who died at Rome in 1576, had filled Italy and Europe, with his aſtrological fame. The merit of his other writings, however eminent, was loſt in that of his calculations. He had even the abſurd impiety to draw the horoſcope of Jeſus Chriſt, and to ſubject him to the chimerical laws, or motions of the celeſtial bodies, by which he explained, and to which he referred, every ſublunary event (150). The moſt philoſophic and enlightened minds of that period, were not altogether ſuperior to theſe vain and viſionary ſtudies. Aſtronomy and mathematics were implicated with aſtrology; and ſciences the moſt ſolid, lent their aid to ſuſtain ignorance and fiction. We may ſee in many parts of the hiſtory of de Thou, that he had not been able to reſiſt ſo general an infection (151). La Noue, though he treats the ſtudy and practice of magic, or aſtrology, as deteſtable, ſpeaks of it as not the leſs real and unqueſtionable (152). Comets and meteors, or phenomena of the Heavens, which our knowledge of aſtronomy enables us to explain, or to view without apprehenſion; ſpread terror over whole kingdoms, and alarmed princes, who conſidered them as preſages of their own approaching diſſolution (153). Catherine of Medicis was, during her whole life, the victim of her apprehenſions; and avoided with anxious ſolicitude, every place, where ſhe fancied that her deſtiny awaited her (154). De Thou aſſures us, that having been admoniſhed

Univerſality of a belief in predictions.

Comets. Terror produced by them.

(150) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 362.
(151) Ibid. p. 134; vol x. p. 215 and 667.
(152) La Noue, p. 8—11.
(153) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 593. Brant. vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 22.
(154) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 639; vol. x. p. 502.

"to

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"to diſtruſt St. Germain," ſhe never could be induced to make other than a ſhort ſtay at the royal caſtle of that name; which ſhe quitted precipitately, on the firſt ſymptoms of indiſpoſition. She even carried her alarms to ſuch a point, that the palace of the Louvre being ſituated in the pariſh of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, ſhe abandoned it; and conſtructed a palace for herſelf, at a vaſt expence, in another quarter of the capital. De Thou betrays his own conviction of the reality of the fact, by acquainting us that the prediction was accompliſhed at her death, becauſe a theologian of the name of St. Germain, was called in to aſſiſt her in her laſt moments (155).

Catherine of Medicis.

Compacts with evil ſpirits.

Compacts with the evil ſpirit, whom we denominate the devil, were regarded as not only poſſible, but common. The confeſſions of ignorant and credulous, or timid and ſuperſtitious wretches, who avowed ſuch pretended communications, were conſidered even by the magiſtrates, as juridical proofs, and puniſhed with exemplary ſeverity (156). The profeſſion of a demoniac, was at once lucrative and celebrated. The perſons, ſelected for perſonating the part, were uſually women of obſcure extraction, ignorant, and afflicted with violent nervous diſorders, by which they were convulſed in a frightful manner. Theſe fits were miſtaken by the credulous, or ſuperſtitious ſpectators, for the infallible proofs of demoniacal poſſeſſion. In 1565, a young woman of Vervins, in Picardy, named Nicola Aubry, and known in hiſtory by the title of "the Demoniac of Laön," was believed to be poſſeſſed by no leſs a number of devils than thirty. Three of the moſt refractory, who could not be expelled by any ordinary exorciſms, were publicly compelled to evacuate their tenement, in preſence of a prodigious

Demoniacs.

Nicola Aubry.

(155) De Thou, vol. x. p. 502.
(156) La Noue, p. 9.

multitude,

multitude, assembled on the occasion. The scene of deception; for such, it can only be esteemed; was the cathedral of the city of Laön, where Nicola Aubry was exhibited on a theatre, expressly constructed to facilitate the view of the ceremony. She appears to have received a complete cure (157).

Other instances.

About ten years afterwards, in 1575, a woman of the loosest life and most abandoned manners, was selected by Marshal Fervaques, as a proper subject for pretended possession. She was instructed by the priest of the village of Bellouet, near Lisieux, in Normandy, how to act the part; and her deliverance from the supposed power of the infernal spirit was magnified into a species of miracle. The shrine, before which this spiritual interposition was performed, became so famous, as to draw to it an incredible number of votaries, devotees, and pilgrims, from every part of France. It is hardly credible that in the short space of three years, near eighty houses, and fifty inns, for the reception and entertainment of those pious strangers, were constructed at Bellouet. When we consider the pecuniary advantages, which must have resulted from the concourse of such guests, we shall no longer wonder at the frequency and repetition of the imposture (158).

It was generally supposed in the sixteenth century, that invisible beings, or demons, practised upon human weakness, assumed the shape of men and women, and under that form, might have the most intimate and criminal communication with persons of either sex. Fancy and terror amused themselves by decorating and personifying the creatures, which they had originally invented. The Succubus, and the Incubus, were not only believed to exist, by the vulgar: men of the deepest learning, and of the

(157) Confess. de Sancy, p. 180, 181.
(158) Ibid. p. 171, 172, and 180.

most

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most acute talents, equally regarded them as real. "The Incubus," says Ambrose Paré, "are de-

The Incubus, and Succubus.

"mons, who transform themselves into the shape "of men, and cohabit with sorceresses. The Suc-"cubus are demons, who, in like manner, assume "the appearance of women (159)." He cites, or relates examples of the fact. But, in another place, he seems only to consider them as a species of the night-mare (160). His understanding, and his prejudices, were evidently at variance, and left him under a degree of uncertainty and indecision.

Nuptial spells.

The nuptial couch was, in like manner, believed to be invaded by supernatural agents, or rendered sterile, by the operation of sorcery and magic. Numerous instances of this opinion might be produced, if the nature of the subject did not render it improper. Paré not only owns and maintains the existence of such charms and spells, as would debilitate, and incapacitate for the functions of marriage; but, he declaims against them and their authors, in the most forcible language. He declares the persons, capable of having recourse to such diabolical arts, in order to frustrate the purposes of wedlock, enemies of God and man. Overborne by the universality of the belief, and deceived by some equivocal or doubtful examples, he did not permit himself to examine, whether they might not either be wholly fictitious, or, the natural result of physical causes. Montaigne is far more philosophical in his opinions on the subject, though at the expence of decency (161).

Familiar spirits obtained equal belief, not only among the vulgar; but, among people of every description (162). Catherine of Medicis consulted

(159) Œuvres de Paré, p. 672.
(160) Ibid. p. 675, 676.
(161) Ibid. p. 676. Montaigne, Essays, chap. xx. p. 120—136.
(162) Brant. vol. ii. Cap Fran. p. 325.

Simeoni,

Simeoni, an aſtrologer, on the choice of a happy and auſpicious day for Charles the Ninth's inauguration (163). Papyre Maſſon aſſures us, that Noſtradamus having drawn his horoſcope, predicted that his reign would be ſanguinary and unfortunate (164). It is certain that Henry the Second ſent that aſtrologer to Blois, in order to aſcertain the deſtinies of his children. In the four lines, compoſed by Noſtradamus, and which were conſidered as prophetic, or deſcriptive of Henry the Second's death by the lance of Montgomery, it is impoſſible to diſcover any thing, except a vague and fanciful alluſion to a combat between two lions, in which one of them loſes his eyes. But, as the imagination of his contemporaries was ſtruck with the ſudden and deplorable cataſtrophé of that monarch, which was the ſignal of the calamities of France; they eagerly ſeized on any caſual reſemblance between the verſes of Noſtradamus, and the fate of the French prince (165). Ronſard, though he doubts of the ſource from which Noſtradamus derived his prophetic powers, and leaves it undetermined whether the Deity, or the demon, inſpired him in his predictions; yet, profeſſes his perfect conviction of the ſupernatural aſſiſtance extended to that impoſtor (166).

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Celebrity and vogue of Noſtradamus.

Prediction of Henry the Second's death.

Margaret of Valois, like her mother Catherine, was immerſed in magical purſuits and ſtudies. She is deſcribed by a lady of her own houſehold, in 1573, as Canidia is in Horace, ſurrounded with ſpells, and invoking the aid of ſupernatural beings. A ſpy, placed by Charles the Ninth, about his ſiſter, writes to him: "The queen of Navarre has been "three days ſhut up, with only three of her women.

Spells.

Margaret of Valois.

(163) Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 102.
(164) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 21.
(165) Biograph. Dict. Art. "Noſtradamus," vol. ix. p. 535.
(166) Œuvres de Ronſard, tom. ix. p. 36, 37.

"One

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" One of them holds the two-edged ſword; ano-
" ther, the paſte; and a third, the iron. She is
" conſtantly in water, and burning incenſe like a
" forcereſs (167)." Such were the occupations of the human mind in that age.

La Broſſe. His predictions to Sully.

Sully founded his inviolable adherence to the king of Navarre, among other reaſons, upon the poſitive aſſurances of la Broſſe, his preceptor, who early revealed to him, that the deſtinies had decreed the elevation of that prince to the throne of France. Nay, La Broſſe had, by his art, aſcertained, that, as Henry and Sully were both born on St. Lucia's day, they would be inſeparably attached to each other, during their lives. Sully made no ſecret of ſo pleaſing a piece of intelligence to his maſter; who, on his part, owned to him, that an aſtrologer, having calculated the nativity of the duke of Alençon, had, not without reluctance, denounced to that prince, a premature and inglorious end; while he had acquainted him, that the crown of France was reſerved for the king of Navarre. Sully lays the ſcene of this converſation as early as 1580, at a time when the events foretold were only, at moſt, probable (168). It is certain, that a general opinion prevailed throughout France, during the reign of Henry the Third, that the ſceptre would paſs into the family of Vendome, or Bourbon (169). This expectation was founded on more ſolid foundations, however, than horoſcopes and nativities. The debaucheries of Henry the Third, and of his brother, the duke of Alençon: the virtue, and the ſterility of Louiſa, wife to the former prince: the preceding deceaſe of Francis the Second, and Charles the Ninth, without male iſſue: and the heroic, or amiable qualities of the young king of Navarre: theſe circumſtances, when combined, operated forci-

Expectation of the extinction of the houſe of Valois, general.

(167) Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. ii. Recherches, p. 102.
(168) Sully, vol. i. p. 31—33.
(169) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 242.

bly

bly on the minds of the nation, and attracted their attention towards the event, which took place by the assassination of Henry the Third, in 1589. CHAP. VI.

The transmutation of metals, and the discovery of the philosopher's stone, was another of the characteristic pursuits of that credulous age. Brantome informs us, that Castelnau de Mauvissiere, a French gentleman of distinction, defrauded Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy, of above fifty thousand crowns, in the prosecution of the research (170). We may see the implicit faith lent to the assurances of these alchymists, in the depositions of the principal persons concerned in the conspiracy of 1574. Grantrye, who had been the embassador of Charles the Ninth to the Grisons, was to have been appointed superintendant of the finances of the duke of Alençon, "because he promised by his art, to convert silver into gold, and by that expedient to pay the duke's army (171)." It is true, that he stipulated at the same time for his retreat into Switzerland, where he was to produce the transmutation. Grantrye being examined before commissioners named for that purpose, declared, that, "while he was resident among the Grisons, he had employed himself in distilling and transmuting metals; that he was possessed of the secret, which he would not communicate to any one except the king, or those whom his majesty should please to name. He added, that he could produce a million of crowns every year; the king only depositing fifty thousand crowns in silver, in order to gain five hundred thousand, annually; and that the profit might be drawn out monthly, or even weekly, if it was thought proper (172)." These pretensions, added to some interest at court,

Transmutation of metals.

Alchymists. Grantrye.

His offers.

(170) Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 112.
(171) Le Lab. sur. Cast. vol. ii. p. 376.
(172) Ibid. p. 368.

exempted

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exempted Grantrye from the fate of his aſſociates, who periſhed on the ſcaffold (173). It would be eaſy to ſelect many ſimilar proofs of the belief given to pretenders to chymical ſecrets.

Pilgrimages.

Pilgrimages were in the higheſt vogue under Henry the Third, who, as well as the queen his wife, had recourſe to them, with a view to obtain iſſue. In 1579, he made a journey of this nature, to the ſhrine of the virgin, at Chartres, which had attained an extraordinary reputation in caſes of ſterility. In order to aſſiſt the effect of his prayers, he received likewiſe, two ſhirts, denominated from their virtues, "Chemiſes de notre Dame," which he carried to Paris, for the queen and himſelf. They were commonly eſteemed infallible recipés. (174). As they proved, however, of no effect, the king, after making vows to various ſaints, invoking their aid or interceſſion; in November, 1582, had recourſe to "our Lady of Lieſſe" in Champagne, who was ſuppoſed to preſide over, and to ſhed her benediction, in an eſpecial degree, upon the nuptial couch. He went thither as a pilgrim (175). Louiſa of Vaudemont ſtill continuing without iſſue, their majeſties repaired twice in the following year, to the virgin at Chartres. Supplications having been found ineffectual alone, they next tried the force of preſents on her. An image of ſilver gilt, repreſenting the virgin herſelf, and weighing a hundred marks, was offered by them (176). They continued nine days in devotion; and repeated the experiment ſome months afterwards, when they preſented a lamp of ſilver, weighing forty marks, together with lands to the amount of above twenty pounds ſterling annual rent, for the purpoſe

Shirts of our Lady.

Remedies for ſterility.

Preſents to the virgin.

(173) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 54.
(174) L'Etoile, p. 35.
(175) Buſbeq. letters the 5th and 9th.
(176) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 136.

of

of keeping it alive, day and night (177). As the virgin perſiſted to reject the royal ſupplications, we find the king, in 1584, going with forty-ſeven companions, all on foot, and in the habit of penitents, to Chartres, and to Clery, another celebrated ſhrine (178). CHAP. VI.

By a profanation, which ſtrongly characterizes the manners of that diſſolute age, religion was made a vehicle for coquetry; and relics were worn by ladies, in order to counteract the ravages of time, or to renovate the attractions of beauty. It is not without aſtoniſhment, that we can reflect on the uſe to which ſome of them were applied. D'Aubigné aſſures us, that the maids of honor belonging to Catherine of Medicis, expreſſed the utmoſt anxiety to redeem from the ſacrilegious hands of the count de la Rochefoucault, a Hugonot, the girdle of St. Catherine of Sienna. It was kept at Tours, from whence the Proteſtants carried it off during the civil wars, under Charles the Ninth. Its virtue was of a ſingular and precious kind; far ſurpaſſing any of the empyrical remedies, ſo common in the preſent time. It was fondly believed by thoſe who uſed it, that it could reſtore to the moſt beautiful part of the female form, its original lovelineſs, when loſt by the effects of age and diſeaſe (179). The ceſtus of the Queen of Love, ſo famous in antiquity, was not more powerful.

Deſpairing of effectual relief from any application of his own to the virgin, Henry had recourſe, in 1582, to the ſovereign pontiff, and demanded the publication of a jubilee, in order to procure him offſpring. Gregory the Thirteenth, who, as we may ſee in the letters and diſpatches of De Foix, the French embaſſador, was frequently very inflexible Jubilees.

(177) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 144.
(178) Ibid. p 175.
(179) Confeſſ. de Sancy, p. 205.

on

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on ecclesiastical or pecuniary matters, expressed the utmost readiness to oblige the French monarch on this point. He even offered, voluntarily, to join his own entreaties and prayers, to those of the king and the nation. To render them more beneficial, the third week in Lent was selected, as peculiarly fitted for pious mortification; and the bull, promulgated for the purpose, enjoined every subject of France to unite in fervent addresses to Heaven (180).

Harangue of the archbishop of Bourges.

In 1588, at the convocation of the States General, the archbishop of Bourges, as president of the clergy, observed in his harangue to the three orders, that "they ought all to implore of the Divine goodness to withdraw from the royal house, the opprobrium of barrenness; to cast a favorable look upon the queen, as he had formerly done upon Anne, the mother of Samuel; and to grant the king a numerous posterity to inherit his dominions (181)." It would seem that the "shirts of our Lady" were apprehended to diffuse a protecting, as well as a generative virtue over their wearers; for Brantome gravely discusses, whether a champion going to engage in a judicial combat, might, or might not, be allowed to wear one of them. He treats them as a species of charm, or pious magic; and concludes by declaring, that if one of the combatants be permitted to avail himself of their assistance, the advantage should be rendered common to both (182). So little progress had the human mind made, at the close of the sixteenth century, even among men of liberality, rank, and education.

Efficacy of charms.

Impediments to travelling.

We may naturally suppose, that during a period so agitated by every calamity of civil and religious dissension, the intercourse from one part of the king-

(180) Lettres de Foix, p. 252 and 258, lettre 28.
(181) De Thou, vol. x. p. 396.
(182) Brant. Les Duels, p. 90.

dom

dom to another, must have been difficult, perilous, and interrupted. Posts, and post-horses, were, indeed, established throughout France; but, the impediments to travelling were, nevertheless, very considerable. All communication with foreign countries, was frequently stopped by order of government, in time of profound peace; nor were even letters and couriers allowed to pass, or secure from arrest and inspection (183). Henry the Second appointed Brusquet, his buffoon, post-master of Paris, which was a very lucrative employment. Brantome informs us, that he had commonly near a hundred horses standing ready for use, in the stables. It appears, likewise, that the price paid by foreigners for them, was one-fifth part higher, than that given by Frenchmen (184). No assertions, however positive, can ever persuade us, that the intelligence of the massacre of St. Bartholomew was carried from Paris to Madrid, in three days and three nights. Yet, Brantome, a contemporary, declares it in terms the most precise, and relates every circumstance attending the reception of the news by Philip the Second (185). The western, and southern provinces, in which lay the principal strength of the Hugonots; and where, of consequence, even during the intervals of civil war, the inhabitants remained always on the watch; were, in fact, hardly to be passed without an escort. Epernon, who was sent from Bourdeaux, with dispatches to Henry the Third at Blois, in 1576, with difficulty found means to penetrate through the intermediate country, which owned neither sovereign, nor laws, nor police (186). D'Aubigné, when dispatched by the king of Navarre to the same prince in 1584, during a period

Posts. Their establishment.

Difficulty of passing from one part of France to another.

(183) Busbeq. letter 8, and letter 15.
(184) Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 289.
(185) Ibid. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 169.
(186) Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 26.

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of nominal tranquillity; yet was so apprehensive of being attacked, or plundered, on the road, that he did not venture to carry with him his master's commission. Having caused it to be copied, he took only the duplicate, leaving the original in his own house (187).

Banditti, and outlaws.

The frontiers were infested by troops of outlaws and banditti, whom persecution had driven to seek subsistence among the mountains or defiles of Savoy and Germany. It was unsafe even for embassadors, or men of the highest quality, to venture beyond the limits of France, unless protected by an armed force. In 1575, Pibrac, on his embassy to Poland, from Henry the Third, was beset by a band of robbers near Montbelliard; his equipage was plundered, two of his attendants were murdered, and he narrowly escaped with his life (188). Henry, prince of Condé, some years afterwards, returning from Geneva into Dauphiné, was, in like manner, stopped and pillaged by ruffians, who, ignorant of his rank, did not detain his person (189). It is, notwithstanding, certain, that the northern and eastern provinces of the kingdom enjoyed, at intervals, a comparative serenity; and that travelling was not only safe, but commodious, in those districts. We may see with what safety, and even convenience, Montaigne travelled in 1580, through Champagne, from La Fere, in Picardy, to Piombieres, in Lorrain; as well as in the following year, from Lyons, across all the interior provinces, to his castle on the Dordogne, in Perigord. He seems to have neither suffered hardship, nor apprehended danger; though it is evident that his attendants were few, and only such as every man of condition

Their numbers.

Facility of travelling in some provinces.

(187) Memoires d'Aub. p. 98.
(188) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 276.
(189) Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 228.

would

would carry with him on a journey (190). It would probably have been difficult, even before the late revolution in 1789, to have discovered at Chalons on the Marne, so good an inn as Montaigne found in that town, above two centuries earlier, in 1580. "We lodged," says he, "at the Crown, which is "a handsome house, and they serve in silver plate: "the greater part of the beds and coverlids are of "silk (191)." This description, and some others, may tend to make us doubt, whether, in the parts of France where civil war had not banished the arts and comforts of life, accommodations, and places of reception for travellers, were greatly inferior to those found in the present age. Montaigne appears to have performed the journey on his own horses; and to have been accompanied or followed by mules for his servants and baggage (192).

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Inns, and accommodations.

Among the disorders frequent during the period under our review, and whose ravages were peculiarly destructive, must be reckoned the plague. That scourge of the human race seemed to have succeeded to the leprosy, which the Cruzaders had brought from the coasts of Syria, as early as the twelfth century. It is clear, that France was scarcely ever altogether free from pestilential diseases; sometimes lurking in the provinces, among the poor inhabitants of obscure towns; sometimes laying waste the capital, and extending their fatal effects over the whole kingdom. No wise and vigilant precautions, such as are adopted by modern states, were taken to prevent its entrance, or to arrest its progress. The insalubrity of cities, the want of air, cleanliness, and police, contributed to nourish or perpetuate it, among the inferior orders of people. To that class, were usually confined its principal attacks, though

Distempers. The plague.

Want of police, and precautions.

(190) Montaigne, Voyages, vol. i. p. 1—23; and vol. iii. p. 452—460.

(191) Ibid. vol. i. p. 14. (192) Ibid. p. 3.

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it ſometimes entered the houſes of the great, and the palaces of kings. In 1562, thirty thouſand perſons were carried off by the plague, in the city of Orleans alone (193). We ſhall not wonder at ſo vaſt a mortality, when we conſider, that the infected were heaped together in rooms, where they communicated the malady to each other. D'Aubigné ſays, that at Orleans, the ſurgeon, and four other perſons of the family, died in the chamber where he himſelf lay at the point of death, of the ſame contagious diſeaſe (194). The plague of 1580, was the moſt memorable and deſtructive of any which took place under Henry the Third. We may ſee in De Thou, all the ſymptoms by which it was preceded and accompanied. In the beginning of June, a diſtemper manifeſted itſelf at Paris, which he denominates "La Coqueluche," or, the hooping cough; but, which, if we may judge from his deſcription, was far more ſerious than the diſorder ſo termed in the preſent age. "It ſhewed itſelf," ſays he, "by an aching at the extremity of the "back-bone; by a ſhivering, followed with heavi- "neſs in the head; and by weakneſs in all the "limbs, joined with a violent pain in the breaſt. "If ſuch as were affected with it, were not cured "by the fourth or fifth day, the malady degenerated "into fever, which almoſt always carried off the "patient. Thoſe who neglected the diſorder, did "well: on the contrary, ſuch as were either bled "or purged, generally died (195)." Henry the Third himſelf, the duke of Guiſe, and many of the firſt nobility, were attacked with this diſtemper, which was immediately followed by the plague (196). "There never," ſays De Thou, "was ſeen a "finer autumn, nor a greater abundance of every

Numbers, carried off by it.

Hooping cough.

Deſcription of it.

Plague at Paris. Its ravages.

(193) D'Aub. Memoires, p. 11. (194) Ibid.
(195) De Thou, vol. iii. p. 401 and 402.
(196) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 117.

"ſort

" fort of fruit; inſomuch that the contagion was believed to proceed, rather from the influence of the ſtars, than from a corruption of the air (197)."—" The plague carried off, in about ſix months, forty thouſand perſons, of whom the greater number conſiſted of the loweſt of the people. It rendered Paris almoſt deſert; and the houſes of the rich, whom fear had induced to fly from the capital, were in great danger of being pillaged by robbers, who, during the nights, armed themſelves, infeſted the ſtreets, and committed diſorders with impunity. All the vigilance of the provoſt of the merchants, aided by the magiſtrates, was ſcarcely effectual to repreſs their outrages (198)." The king, after firſt retiring to St. Maur, only a league from the metropolis, withdrew precipitately to Blois, in order to ſecure himſelf from infection. In this criſis, the intrepid and magnanimous conduct of Chriſtopher de Thou, firſt preſident of the parliament of Paris, and father to the celebrated hiſtorian, juſt cited, eminently conduced to preſerve that city from complete anarchy and deſolation. Though he was arrived at a very advanced period of life, and was accuſtomed annually to repair to his country-houſe during the autumnal ſeaſon; he refuſed to conſult either his own ſafety, eaſe, or gratification, at the expence of his public duty. He even appeared every day in his coach, in the ſtreets, to convince the people how much he deſpiſed the danger, and to animate them by his example. We muſt own, that ſuch a character would not have diſgraced the conſular ages of Rome.

Magnanimity of preſident De Thou.

Precautions and exertions, for diminiſhing the violence of the contagion, ſeem to have been made by the magiſtrates of Paris, in 1580. An officer,

Exertions made to check its progreſs.

(197) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 401 and 402.
(198) Ibid. p. 400. Œuvres de Paré, p. 568.

intitled

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intitled from his functions, the provoſt of health, was created, who cauſed the ſick to be tranſported to hoſpitals, where they appeared to be unable to procure proper aſſiſtance in their own houſes. Tents were pitched without the walls, for their reception; and a contribution for ſupporting theſe extraordinary expences, was raiſed upon the inhabitants (199). Malvedy, mathematical inſtructor to the king, and who poſſeſſed an equal knowledge of medicine, undertook to attend the diſeaſed; but, it does not ſeem to have been with any eminent ſucceſs. The peſtilence raged for ſix months, and diminiſhed as the winter approached. It is not unworthy of remark, that ſo awful a viſitation of Providence, far from amending, rather augmented, the depravity of manners, among the people. Such was the ſolitude and depopulation of the capital, that the tradeſmen not only played bowls upon the bridge of "Notre "Dame," and in the great hall where the courts of law were accuſtomed to be held; but, games of chance and tables for play were eſtabliſhed in the ſtreets (200). A circumſtance very ſimilar is related by Boccace, relative to the effect of the great peſtilence, in 1348, upon the manners of the Florentines (201). Almoſt all the towns and villages in the vicinity of Paris, caught the infection. At Laön, in Picardy, it was ſo violent, as to carry off ſix thouſand perſons (202).

Diſſolution of manners, produced by it.

Notwithſtanding theſe deſtructive ravages, ſo little had the malignity of the diſtemper ceaſed, or ſo inattentive were the magiſtrates to effect its total extinction, that we find it re-appearing in the capital and in the provinces, during the greater part of the

Re-appearance of the plague.

(199) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 118.
(200) Ibid. p. 119. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 67.
(201) Decameron, vol. i. p. iv. Preface.
(202) De Thou, vol. viii. p. 400. Lettres de Foix, p. 46.

years

years 1583 and 1584. One of the ladies of the queen's houſehold having been ſeized with it, and carried off ſuddenly at Blois, the court fled to St. Germain (203). We may ſee in the Memoirs of Sully, what havoc was made by the plague in that age, and what terror it inſpired (204). In 1587, having obtained permiſſion to viſit his wife, who had remained at Roſny; he learnt on his arrival, that the greater part of the inhabitants of the town were already dead of the plague; and that in the caſtle, where ſhe reſided, two of her women, and three of her domeſtics, had been carried off by the ſame malady. Such was the violence of the contagion, that ſhe was reduced to quit the caſtle, and to remain two days and two nights in the adjoining foreſt, in her coach, as no perſon would open their houſe for her reception." "I found her lodged," ſays he, "in a caſtle named Huets, lent her by my aunt, "Madame de Campagnac, with no other attendants, "than one young lady, a maid-ſervant, a coachman, "and a lacquey. When I arrived, ſhe repeatedly "refuſed to open the gates; imploring me from "a window, with her hands claſped, and tears in "her eyes, not to approach her for at leaſt a month." Sully's affection and impatience ſurmounted, notwithſtanding, his terrors, and induced him to enter the caſtle (205).

Account given of it by Sully.

It is difficult for the imagination to conceive a picture more terrible, or affecting, than that drawn by Paré, in his medical works, of the plague. He had been converſant with it, and preſent at its ravages, throughout a long life. He deſcribes its operation on the human mind, on ſociety, and on the affections of the heart, in colors the moſt glowing and

Deſcription of it, by Paré.

(203) Buſbeq. letters 20, 22, 27, and 43.
(204) Sully, vol. i. p. 34.
(205) Ibid. p. 53 and 54.

awful.

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awful. All the charities, ties, and connexions of life, seemed to disappear and extinguish before it. Far from extending aid to those who were attacked by its malignant symptoms, they were instantly abandoned, or driven out to perish, by their own nearest relatives. The terror of receiving the infection surmounted every emotion, and steeled to pity the most benevolent, or generous minds. Populous cities became suddenly desert; and every habitation was shut, or quitted, by its owners. Bands of desperate malefactors, or robbers, availing themselves of the general consternation, entered the houses of the dying, plundered their effects, and even accelerated their end, by strangling them in their beds (206). It would be incredible, if we did not know the fact from the same inconteſtable authority, that these wretches even endeavoured to spread the pestilential and malignant influence of the distemper, by besmearing the doors and window-shutters of those houses where the infection had not hitherto penetrated, with the virulent and infectious matter, taken from the bodies of persons already dead of the plague. The presence of Charles the Ninth himself did not restrain, or prevent, these flagitious enormities, at Lyons, in 1565 (207). No spiritual assistance could be procured for the sick; but, in the houses of the opulent, a surgeon was usually shut up with the family, and compelled to administer help, while any remained alive (208). The calamity attained to its utmost point of horror and destruction, by the incapacity of burying the dead, whose bodies remaining in a state of putrefaction, spread the infection to the survivors. "Even "the physicians themselves were pursued," says

State of those infected.

(206) Œuvres de Paré, p. 567, 568.
(207) Ibid. p. 536 and 570. (208) Ibid. p. 570.

Paré,

Paré, "when they appeared in the ſtreets, by the "inhabitants, who attempted to murder them with "ſtones, like mad dogs; exclaiming, that they "ought only to come out by night, leſt they ſhould "communicate the diſeaſe to ſuch as had hitherto "eſcaped its malignity (209)."

The practice, common during a great part of the ſixteenth century, of leaving, uninterred, the corpſes of thoſe who fell in battles, contributed, in no ſmall degree, to ſpread, and to produce the moſt peſtilential maladies. We cannot read without amazement and diſguſt, the recital made us by Paré, of the ſpectacle which the field of St. Quintin exhibited, ſome few days after that celebrated engagement, in the ſummer of 1557. "Several gentlemen," ſays he, "who were ſent to endeavour to find the body "of Monſieur de Bois-Dauphin, who had been "killed in the late action, requeſted me to accompany "them. Their ſearch was unſucceſsful; the putre-"faction which had univerſally taken place, having "ſo diſfigured the corpſes, as to render them no "longer recognizable. We ſaw the earth covered "with human bodies, for more than half a league "round us; and our ſtay was ſhort, on account of the "cadaverous ſtench, iſſuing from ſuch a multitude "of men and horſes. Our arrival diſturbed the "flies, which were ſettled on them: they were of a "monſtrous ſize, with green and blue backs. "When they roſe into the air, ſuch were their "numbers, as to darken the ſun; and they buzzed "in a marvellous manner. I believe, that they "were ſufficient to produce the plague, in the place "where they ſettled (210)."

Cuſtom of leaving the dead, unburied.

If the ravages of the plague were, in a great degree, limited to the inferior orders of ſociety, there was another diſtemper frequent in that age, whoſe

Other diſtempers.

(209) Œuvres de Paré, 368. (210) Ibid. p. 795.

attacks

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attacks were hardly leſs fatal, and which ſeemed to be directed againſt ſovereigns, in common with the meaneſt of their ſubjects. It is remarkable, that Paré, who has written on the nature, ſymptoms, and cure of this ſcourge of the human race, and whoſe authority muſt be regarded as ſuperior to any other of the period, does not ſeem to conſider it as imported from America. On the contrary, he ſays, that it was denominated by the Romans, "Pudendagra;" and, in another place, he aſſerts, that it reſembled, in many of its ſymptoms, the diſeaſe called "Mentagra," with which, under Tiberius, the Roman empire was afflicted (211). The recital given by him of the effects, produced from its attacks on the body, cannot be peruſed without horror. Yet, he admits, in the moſt pointed terms, that, at the time when he wrote, under Charles the Ninth and Henry the Third, it was infinitely diminiſhed in violence. "The diſorder of the preſent time, is much leſs "cruel, and eaſier of cure, than it was, at its firſt "commencement, in time paſt; for, it evidently "becomes mitigated, from day to day. Aſtrologers "attribute this fact to the influences of the ſky."— "Phyſicians rather chuſe to refer it to the invention "of a number of excellent remedies, which men "of talents have diligently ſought, in order to oppoſe ſo cruel an evil (212)."

Remedies.

Four different modes of treating the diſtemper, were known and practiſed, when Paré wrote, between 1570, and 1585. "The firſt," ſays he, "is "the decoction of gum-guaiacum: the ſecond, by "unctions: the third, by mercury: the fourth, by "perfumes (213)." But, he repeatedly and decidedly maintains, that the only ſpecific and ſovereign remedy, is mercury. He denominates it the

(211) Œuvres de Paré, p. 444 and 446.
(212) Ibid. p. 446. (213) Ibid. p. 447.

true

true antidote; and compares it to a ferret, which chaſes and expels the malady, however concealed, or inveterate (214).

The diſeaſe which Columbus is accuſed of having brought from the New World, was not felt in any of the royal houſes of Europe, in ſo ſevere a manner as in France. One of the moſt accompliſhed princes of the ſixteenth century, Francis the Firſt, expired in the vigor of his age and talents, from its incurable effects. It was in vain that Henry the Third addreſſed his prayers to the Virgin, or obtained jubilees from the ſovereign pontiffs. He had met with an accident, amidſt the ſplendor of his reception at Venice, in 1574, which had incapacitated him for perpetuating the family of Valois (215). His brother, the duke of Alençon, youngeſt of the four ſons of Henry the Second, and laſt deſcendant of ſo many monarchs, was even, if poſſible, more unfortunate. His face, disfigured and hideous, expoſed him to univerſal pity, or deriſion; and his premature death was probably cauſed by the ſame complaint, which had abridged the life and reign of his grandfather (216). After the lapſe of near a whole century ſince the introduction of that diſeaſe, we may judge how malignant it was ſtill eſteemed, and how little progreſs had been made in its extirpation or cure; by the regulations eſtabliſhed at the public baths of Plombieres, in Lorrain, as late as 1581. All women of pleaſure or diſorderly conduct, were prohibited, by order of the dukes of Lorrain, not only from preſuming to enter the baths; but, from approaching within five hundred paces of them, on pain of being whipped at the four corners of the town (217).

Francis the First.

Henry the Third.

Duke of Alençon.

(214) Œuvres de Paré, p. 444 and 449, and 555.
(215) Davila, p. 598.
(216) Buſbeq. letter 19. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 701.
(217) Voyages de Montaigne, vol. i. p. 32.

Inter-

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Intermitting fevers.

Intermitting fevers and agues appear to have been general among armies and ſoldiers. It would be endleſs to cite examples; nor can we wonder at their frequency or obſtinacy, when we recollect, that the only ſpecific for thoſe diſorders, the bark of Peru, was not imported into Europe before the reign of Louis the Thirteenth (218). It may excite a ſmile in the preſent age, to know that the French monarchs laid claim to the ſame ſupernatural power of curing the ſchrophula, or king's evil, ſo long arrogated and exerciſed by Engliſh princes. It was performed by touching with the right hand. Paré informs us, that in 1564, when Charles the Ninth, then ſcarcely fourteen years old, viſited Bayonne, Spaniards of condition came, to receive the benefit of his touch. He tacitly confeſſes, at the ſame time, its inefficacy, when he adds, that he afterwards treated them according to the principles of art, and effected ſeveral cures (219). Henry the Third ſeems, very prudently, to have declined exerting its virtue on Epernon, his favorite, who, in 1584, was attacked with the diſeaſe ſo immediately ſubjected to his maſter's power and controul. The pretenſion ſeems, indeed, to have excited among men of liberality and education, not leſs ridicule in the ſixteenth, than in the eighteenth century (220).

King's evil.

General review of the period.

Before we finally diſmiſs the period under our conſideration, it may be proper to take a general review of the great characteriſtic vices and virtues by which it was marked; and which ſtrongly diſcriminated it, as a portion of time, either from the age of Francis the Firſt which preceded it, or from that of Henry the Fourth, and Louis the Thirteenth, by which it was followed. Unhappily, the liſt of vices,

Characteriſtic vices.

(218) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etrang. p. 182. Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 106.

(219) Œuvres de Paré, p. 800. (220) Buſbeq. letter 43.

includes

includes many of the moſt deformed, or diſguſting features of human nature; whereas the virtues may be compriſed in a narrow compaſs. In both, we trace the genius of the nation, as it then exiſted; violent, intemperate, and carrying even its laudable qualities to a cenſurable exceſs. At the head of the vices, may be placed the practice of mingling oaths and imprecations in ordinary diſcourſe. It is well known, that Francis the Firſt, however diſſolute in his pleaſures, yet carefully abſtained from every ſpecies of profaneneſs of language. His common and peculiar atteſtation was, "on the faith of a gentleman," which he piqued himſelf on preſerving unſullied (221). So different were the habits of Charles the Ninth, that all his converſation was mingled with blaſphemous and indecent oaths. Catherine of Medicis was, herſelf, the cauſe of it, by placing him under the tuition of marſhal Retz, a Florentine, who infuſed into his pupil, the moſt odious principles. "He taught the young monarch," ſays de Thou, "to ſwear, never to ſpeak the truth, "and always to diſguiſe his thoughts (222)." Can we wonder at the pernicious effects of ſuch a ſyſtem of education? The cuſtom was become univerſal, and excited ſo little animadverſion, that even children and peaſants, as well as gentlemen and ſoldiers, permitted themſelves an unbounded freedom of imprecation (223).

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Imprecations.

Education of Charles the Ninth.

Univerſality of imprecations.

It will ſcarcely be credited, that "legends of "oaths," containing every mode and variation of blaſphemy, were publiſhed, as if to circulate and facilitate their uſe (224). We find that the practice excited, by its enormity, the attention of govern-

(221) Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 229.
(222) De Thou, vol. vii. p. 746.
(223) La Noue, premier Diſcours, p. 6 and 7. Hiſt des derniers Troubles de Fra. liv. ii. p. 38.
(224) Eſprit de la Ligue, note, vol. ii. p. 103.

ment.

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ment. Henry the Third was, himself, exempt from the reproach, if we may believe Chiverny (225): yet, Sir Edward Stafford, in his famous dispatch to queen Elizabeth, of the 25th of February, 1588, expressly repeats the great oaths which the king swore during his discourse (226). In his harangue to the States at Blois, in December, of the same year, he strongly insisted on the necessity of prohibiting blasphemies, under severe penalties; and on the propriety of punishing, without distinction, all such as should be guilty of the practice (227). He was followed by Montholon, the keeper of the seals, in the same assembly; who warned the nobility from provoking and drawing down the divine vengeance, by their execrable, and familiar custom of swearing (228). But no effectual exertion was made for the reform of so general and disgraceful a vice. The king of Navarre, in his declaration from Saumur, dated in April, 1589, warmly exhorts the Catholic clergy to interpose their efforts for checking and suppressing it. The admonitions of a Hugonot and an excommunicated prince, were not, it must be owned, likely to awaken the zeal, or to stimulate the fervor of the Romish ecclesiastics (229). We may see in Brantome, what strange and eccentric imprecations were common among military men, who generally affected one peculiar to themselves, and made use of it as their special form of attesting, or assuring any fact (230).

Ineffectual attempts of government, to repress the practice,

and of the king of Navarre.

Libertinism.

Never, perhaps, was libertinism and debauch carried to a greater height, than under Henry the Third. It had gradually augmented since the accession of Francis the First, and it attained to an enormous

(225) Chiverny, vol. i. p. 148.
(226) Hardwick State Papers, vol. i. p. 251—264.
(227) De Thou, vol. x. p. 378. (228) Ibid. p. 386.
(229) Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 177.
(230) Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 104.

pitch

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pitch during the reign of his last descendant. Catherine of Medicis, destitute of sentiments of virtue, and consulting only interest or policy in all her steps, did not hesitate, throughout her whole life, to sacrifice the chastity and honor of her female attendants, to the completion of her objects. Every negociation was facilitated, and every treaty was cemented, by some victim, selected from among the numerous and brilliant circle of ladies, who attended her wherever she moved. It was denominated the "Escardon volant (231)."—"The impudicity of the young women of the court in general," says a contemporary writer, "but, peculiarly, of the attendants of the queen-mother, is so notorious, that among all the courtiers, not a testimony could be found in their favour (232)." Mademoiselle de Rouet, who was sacrificed to Anthony, king of Navarre, and who attended him even to his last moments; Mademoiselle de Limeuil, who, by the express command of Catherine, permitted the criminal assiduities of Louis, prince of Condé, and was brought to bed in the queen-dowager's apartments; together with a long train of others, commemorated by Brantome and d'Aubigné, leave no room to doubt of the depravity of the court. An example so pernicious did not fail to produce the worst effects on the morals of the court, and of the nation. If we wish to read the description of the former, as it existed in 1572, under Charles the Ninth; we may see it in the strongest language and colors, by the pen of the queen of Navarre, Jane d'Albret, in a letter to her son, the prince of Bearn, afterwards Henry the Fourth. It is dated from Blois, where the French

Dissolute conduct of Catherine of Medicis.

Letter of Jane d'Albret to her son.

(231) Esprit de la Ligue, vol. ii. p. 165 and 166, and p. 298. Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. ii. Recherches, p. 55.

(232) Tocsin des Massacres, p. 49, cited in the Confession de Sancy, p. 461.

court

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court then reſided, and merits to be univerſally known. The duplicity, and treachery of the king and his mother, are expoſed without diſguiſe. We trace in every line, the apprehenſions of a parent for her child, whoſe morals, ſhe dreaded, might be corrupted by the contact with ſo diſſolute a ſociety, from which not only religion, but decorum itſelf, was baniſhed. "It is not," ſays ſhe, "the men "who ſolicit the women here: the women corrupt "and ſolicit the men (233)."

Margaret of Valois.

Margaret of Valois, wife of Henry the Fourth, realized in her conduct, every thing related of the Meſſalinas and Fauſtinas of antiquity. Abandoned from her earlieſt years to the moſt ſhameleſs libertiniſm, ſhe rendered the court of Navarre a theatre of intrigue; and did not even heſitate to aid her huſband's amours, by every poſſible ſubſervien-

Her profligacy, and debauchery.

cy (234). She had ſcarcely attained her twenty-firſt year, when ſhe ſucceſsfully undertook, in concert with the duke of Guiſe, and the cardinal of Lorrain, to ſhake the nuptial fidelity of Mary of Cleves, princeſs of Condé, who was conducted to the duke of Anjou's bed, by Margaret (235). Even to its lateſt period, her life was a perpetual ſcene of ſenſuality and proſtitution. She was imitated by the ladies of that voluptuous court, who blended libertiniſm even with the moſt pious exerciſes and acts of devotion. "The ducheſſes of Guiſe, and "of Nevers," ſays d'Aubigné, "had the portraits "of their two lovers, Roquemont, and the baron "de Fumel, painted as on the croſs, in their prayer-"books, and cloſets. They, in a ſimilar manner, "had the likeneſſes of their miſtreſſes, under the "character and dreſs of the Virgin." Such a pro-

(233) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 869—601.
(234) Vie de Marg. p. 314. Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 56.
(235) Vie de Marg. p. 126.

fanation

fanation of the most sacred mysteries of religion, excites not more amazement, than it impresses with horror. CHAP. VI.

How loose was the education bestowed on young women of condition, and how licentious were the manners, we may see in the writings of l'Hopital. "The first lesson of a mother to her daughter," says that severe and virtuous magistrate, "is to in-"struct her how to distribute with grace, the edifice "of her hair; to spoil by art the lustre of her na-"tural attractions; to adorn her head with dia-"monds, and her bosom with a necklace of gold. "She next carries her to the suppers of our pre-"lates, so prolonged, and so licentious. The un-"fortunate girl is lost at her return (236)." Brantome declares in the clearest and least ambiguous language, that there was hardly a young woman, married or single, who, on her first arrival at court, did not fall into the hands of the cardinal of Lorrain, and was not seduced by his presents. "Few, or "none," says he, "quitted the court, with their "honor (237)." Depraved and loose education. Its effects.

Henry the Third, not content with exhibiting in his own conduct, a model of the most depraved and effeminate debauch, endeavoured, by precept and exhortation, to encourage vice, and to render female chastity ridiculous. Either destitute of inclination or of ability to practise his own maxims, he delighted in defaming and exposing the weaknesses with which he became acquainted. "Never," says a contemporary writer, "did the court of our kings, "in which formerly the French nobility learnt the "exercise of virtue, overflow so much with every "kind of disorder, luxury, and excess, as under "the reign of Henry the Third; peculiarly, in the Encouragement given to vice by Henry the Third.

(236) Confess. de Sancy, p. 234. Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. Epitres, p. 128.

(237) Brant. vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 418.

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" years 1586 and 1587. It may be ſaid that " every thing was then permitted, except to be " virtuous (238)." Brantome did not heſitate to dedicate his work, denominated, " The Lives of " the Women of Gallantry of his own Time," to the duke of Alençon: a production, which, in depravity of ſentiment and of language, may rank with the worſt age (239). It ſeems difficult to form an idea of a more abandoned court, than that which he depictures. " I knew," ſays he, " a Venetian painter, by name Bernardo, who " kept a ſhop at Paris: he has ſworn to me, that " within the ſpace of a year, he had ſold more than " fifty ſets of Aretino, to ladies, married and un- " married (240)." He aſſerts in another place, that women of beauty were commonly ſent by their huſbands, to ſolicit the judges in all cauſes of moment; and that it was notorious, how much the decrees and ſentences were affected by the compliances of female ſuitors (241). La Noue, and Le Laboureur, confirm, in the fulleſt manner, all the aſſertions of Brantome (242).

Works of Brantome.

Depravity of the court.

In the more ſelect and private pleaſures of that age and court, decency itſelf was withdrawn. In 1577, we find the king giving an entertainment to his brother, the duke of Alençon, at the caſtle of Pleſſiz les Tours. The company was numerous, and all the gueſts of both ſexes were habited in green. It is hardly credible, that the ladies who aſſiſted at it were dreſſed in men's clothes, half naked, having their hair looſe and floating on their backs, as it was then commonly worn by brides.

Entertainments and banquets of Henry the Third.

(238) Hiſt des derniers Troub. de Fra. liv. ii. p. 39.—" à Lyons, " 1597."
(239) Brantome, vol. i. Dames Gal. Dedication.
(240) Ibid. p. 60.
(241) Brantome, vol. i. Dames Gal. p 224 and 225.
(242) La Noue, p. 14—16. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 102.

In

In this diſorderly attire, they ſerved at table, and brought up the diſhes. It appears, that the queen-mother herſelf, though then in a very advanced age, was not aſhamed to aſſiſt, and to preſide at ſo indecent a banquet (243). The amours of Henry became the opprobrium of mankind, and were ſuppoſed to be of a nature, which the purity and dignity of hiſtory cannot mention, without contamination. His minions ſubjected him to the contumely and abhorrence of his own ſubjects. They were young men, whoſe dreſs and manners partook more of a feminine, than of a manly beauty. An author of that period, deſcribing them as they commonly appeared in 1576, ſays, "that they wore their hair long, "frized to a great degree, and turning up over "their little velvet bonnets, preciſely like wo-"men (244)." Alluſions to the apprehended nature of his attachment towards them, were made in all the ſatirical verſes or epigrams of the time.

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Minions of that monarch.

Satires.

We find in D'Aubigné, who, though a Hugonot, is a writer of veracity, and who had acceſs to the higheſt information; that the king contracted a marriage with Quelus, and afterwards with another of his minions. The contract of this abominable union was even ſigned by Henry, in his own blood; and the Marquis d'O, ſuperintendant of the finances, witneſſed it in the ſame manner, having opened one of his veins, for the purpoſe. After the death of Maugiron, the king laviſhed marks of fondneſs and affection on his corpſe, which are not to be reflected on without aſtoniſhment, nor related without debaſing the dignity of the human ſpecies, and ſtaining the Engliſh language. It is only in the effeminate and monſtrous vices of the Syrian, Heliogabalus, that we can find in antiquity, any pa-

Vices.

(243) L'Etoile, p. 21.
(244) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 70.

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rallel to thoſe of Henry the Third. The younger part of the members, deputed to the States General, convoked at Blois, in 1588, complained publicly, in their letters to the provinces by whom they were ſent, that attempts were not only made to corrupt their principles, and to gain their ſuffrages; but, to ſubject them to the pleaſures of their ſovereign (245).

Profanations.

By a refinement in vice and impiety, which excites horror, he made even the exerciſes of devotion ſubſervient to his deteſtable gratifications. The moſt ſkilful artiſts were employed in adorning his miſſals and prayer-books, with the portraits of his minions, habited in the monaſtic dreſs of St. Francis, or of St. Jerome. We can ſcarcely believe, if it was not aſſerted by contemporary writers of the beſt authority, that ſeveral of the moſt favoured, were repreſented on the croſs, with the attributes of our Saviour; and others, depictured and dreſſed in the character of the Virgin Mary (246). To render this monument of impious ſenſuality ſtill more ſingular, it was conſecrated to vengeance, as well as to pleaſure. At the end of the prayers, were ſimilar portraits of the individuals, who had rejected and diſdained his ſolicitations. Among them, was peculiarly diſtinguiſhed the head of Francis de Chatillon, ſon to the admiral Coligni, with his ſleeves turned up, in order to diſplay his arms. Round it was this inſcription: "Non per amor, "mà per vendetta (247)." It is difficult to conceive, or to convey an idea of greater depravity; nor can we wonder at the indignation and contempt which ſuch a conduct excited, not only in the court, but throughout the country.

(245) Confeſſ. de Sancy, p. 201, 202, and 219.

(246) D'Aubigné, Hiſtoire Gen. vol. iii. p. 362. Confeſſ. de Sancy, p. 213, 214, and 223—225, and 234, and p. 236.

(247) Confeſſ. de Sancy, p. 204.

Tavannes

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Tavannes does not hesitate to say, that the institution of the order of the Holy Ghost, in 1579, was only designed to commemorate the amours of the king with his two minions, Quelus and Maugiron, who had been recently killed in a duel; and, that he celebrated by it, their funeral games, in imitation of Alexander and Hadrian, who had thus immortalized their favorites, Ephestion, and Antinous (248). It is true, that he mentions this extraordinary fact, as, possibly, only a calumny; but, he allows, that Henry the Fourth altered the cyphers and devices worn by the knights, which implies the truth of the report (249).

Order of the Holy Ghost.

Public honor and principle did not survive the extinction of private virtue and morality. Corruption found its way into the highest departments, and every thing became venal. Under Henry the Second, the constable Montmorency did not blush to accept the estate and castle of Chateaubriant, from the count of that name, in recompence for the order of St. Michael, obtained through his interest (250). But, though he forgot his own dignity in such a transaction, he would have been incapable of betraying his master to his foreign enemies. After the accession of Charles the Ninth, ministers occupying the first employments of state, were so base as to sell their sovereign and their country to Spain. In 1565, when Philip the Second meditated his detestable project of seizing and delivering over Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre, together with her two children, to the Inquisition; intelligence of the design was communicated to the French court, by Elizabeth, queen of Spain, sister to Charles the Ninth. The Spanish officer, who was charged with dispatches, containing not only

Corruption and venality.

Examples of those vices.

Ministers, sold to Spain.

(248) Tavannes, p. 179.
(249) Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. iii. p. 41.
(250) Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 124.

the

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the particulars of that plot; but, of the machinations of Philip againſt the repoſe of the French monarchy, might have been eaſily apprehended on his road to Paris, or on his return to Madrid: but, the king of Spain had already found means to corrupt, and to purchaſe ſome of the moſt confidential ſervants of his brother-in-law, who averted the blow, and permitted the courier to perform his journey, unmoleſted. L'Aubeſpine, firſt ſecretary of ſtate, was Philip's penſioner; and ſo notorious was his corruption, that the conſtable Montmorency no ſooner knew of L'Aubeſpine's having been acquainted with the tranſaction by Catherine of Medicis, than he inſtantly predicted the conſequence; and foretold, that the courier would be allowed to quit Paris without injury (251).

L'Aubeſpine.

Villeroy.

During the reign of Henry the Third, it was not even doubted, that Spaniſh gold pervaded the inmoſt receſſes of the cabinet. In 1587, the duke of Epernon reproached Villeroy, then ſecretary of ſtate, in preſence of the king himſelf, with betraying to the League and to Philip the Second, every ſecret of importance. So rude an inſult was ſuppoſed to have been committed with the royal participation and concurrence. Epernon accuſed him of receiving a penſion of double piſtoles (252). It is, however, certain, that Villeroy, in his Memoirs, while he avows the corruption of the age and of the miniſtry, juſtifies himſelf, in a ſatisfactory manner, from having taken money, or accepted any pecuniary bribe (253). The treaſonable correſpondence and connexion between the Guiſes, as heads of the League, and the king of Spain, was ſo undiſguiſed, that ſcarcely even a veil was drawn over the tranſac-

The Guiſes. Their connexion with Philip the Second.

(251) Villeroy, Memoires, vol. ii. p. 56 and 57.
(252) Memoires pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 228.
(253) Villeroy, Mem. vol. i. p. 122—126.

tion.

tion. We may judge, of what nature, and how momentous, were the ſervices to be rendered on the part of the princes of Lorrain, by the magnitude of the ſums received from Philip. After the aſſaſſination of the duke, at Blois, in 1588, it was aſcertained, that he carried on a regular intercourſe with Spain and Savoy. The amount of the money tranſmitted him by the former power, during ten years, ſince the death of Don John of Auſtria, did not fall much ſhort of two hundred thouſand pounds (254). It muſt be owned, that Philip paid dear for the alliance and friendſhip of the Guiſes. In return, they convulſed, and had nearly overturned, the French monarchy. The remittances from Madrid, enabled them to ſhake the fidelity of many of the royal governors. Villars, to whom Havre-de-Grace had been entruſted, ſold the place, together with himſelf, in 1588, to the League, for fifteen thouſand crowns (255). His conduct was, by no means, ſingular.

Vaſt ſums expended by that prince.

It is curious to ſee, that the ſame venality which ſo ſtrongly marked the French court and miniſters, was practiſed by Charles the Ninth and his ſucceſſor with ſimilar induſtry, if not with ſimilar ſucceſs, in other kingdoms. We cannot doubt, from the original letters ſtill exiſting of thoſe two monarchs, addreſſed to the embaſſador of France in England, that they diſpenſed continual largeſſes and penſions, to perſons occupying the higheſt public ſituations about Elizabeth. The great object of both princes, was to effect the marriage of the duke of Alençon with the Engliſh queen. In order to compaſs it, no promiſes, engagements, or preſents, were ſpared: but, the two former were more liberally beſtowed than the latter. Ladies, who could facilitate, or

Corruption in foreign courts.

England.

(254) De Thou, vol. x. p. 480. Villeroy, Mem. vol. iii. p. 123.
(255) Davila, p. 676.

accelerate

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accelerate the propoſed match, found reaſon to be ſatisfied with the liberality and attention of the queen-dowager. Catherine of Medicis, writing on the 29th of April, 1573, to the embaſſador at London, ſays: "I ſhall cauſe to be preſented to the "Sieur de Walſingham, as he paſſes through Paris, "on his return home, two pieces of fine black ſilk "cloth for his wife, and two others in colors, with "gold and ſilver intermixed, for her daughter; in "order to gratify him as much as poſſible, on ac- "count of the hope that I have in his promiſes, to "do all in his power towards accompliſhing the "ſaid marriage (256)." Sir Francis Walſingham was at that time going over to England, from his embaſſy in France. That the earl of Leiceſter ſhould accept of penſions, or gratifications, from a foreign prince, cannot excite ſurprize. His rapacity and his other vices, juſtify the imputation. But, that the lord-treaſurer Burleigh, condeſcended to receive the gold of Charles the Ninth, and to bargain for the ſurrender of his miſtreſs to the duke of Alençon, is more difficult to believe. If, however, the diſpatches of the king of France, and his mother, of "the 18th of January, 1574," do not abſolutely prove this fact; it muſt be owned, that they afford ſtrong preſumptions of its exiſtence (257). We find the earl of Leiceſter, four years afterwards, in 1578, expreſſing his diſcontent to the French embaſſador, at the non-performance of the promiſes of money, which had been made to him, on the part of Henry the Third. That prince renews his aſſurances of being liberal in future, and relies on the earl's beſt exertions to cultivate the friendſhip between the queen and himſelf (258).

Letter of Catherine of Medicis.

Lord Burleigh.

Earl of Leiceſter.

(256) Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 330.
(257) Ibid. p. 373. (258) Ibid. p. 551.

It

It cannot excite wonder, that in a period ſo corrupt and diſſolute, religion was overborne by the torrent of immorality. True piety could not exiſt in ſo contagious an atmoſphere. Infidelity, impiety, and even atheiſm, were characteriſtics of the nation, and had made a general progreſs among every rank of men. The long continuance of the civil wars, had tended to render the two parties equally indifferent to that very cauſe which originally produced them (259). Such was the open contempt of the Catholic troops of the duke of Mayenne, for the ordinances of the Romiſh faith, that, in 1589, they not only tranſgreſſed againſt one of its moſt peremptory injunctions, by eating fleſh publicly during Lent; but, they added to it mockery and profanation. By menaces of death, they compelled the prieſts to baptize ſheep, pigs, and other animals, and to call them by the names of various kinds of fiſh. The duke of Mayenne was obliged to tolerate theſe enormities, which ſtrongly prove the univerſal diſſolution of manners (260). We may cloſe the liſt of vices, by one of a nature more immediately deſtructive than any hitherto enumerated; but, which has been already deſcribed in its effects. The unlimited ſcope and exerciſe of vengeance deſolated private life; armed individuals againſt each other, produced aſſaſſinations, duels, and murders; and converted the kingdom into a vaſt charnel houſe.

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Irreligion, and impiety.

Profanations, committed by the Catholic ſoldiery.

Exerciſe of private vengeance.

The characteriſtic virtues of the period were few; and, far from diſpelling, they ſcarcely illuminate the darkneſs. Some illuſtrious examples of inflexible integrity; of loyalty and public virtue; and even of a magnanimous dereliction or contempt of

Virtues of the period, few.

(259) La Noue, p. 5—7. Hiſt. des der. Troub. de Fra. p. 38.
(260) Mem. pour ſer. à l'Hiſt. de Fra. 282 and 283.

private

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private intereſt, when oppoſed to the general welfare, may, indeed, be produced. The names of Olivier, and of L'Hopital, ſucceſſively chancellors of France, and of Chriſtopher de Thou, firſt preſident of the Parliament of Paris: thoſe of Francis of Montmorency, of marſhal d'Aumont, of Sancy, of Souvré, and of ſeveral others, might diffuſe a luſtre over the worſt age: but, ſuch are to be found under Domitian, and under Commodus, and can only be conſidered as ſhining exceptions to the national character. It is with difficulty, that among a people ſo corrupt, we diſcover ſome amiable or elevated qualities allied to virtue, and challenging our eſteem or admiration. The ſame impartiality which ſtigmatizes vice and crime, demands the commemoration of whatever is laudable and generous. Even the ſhadow may be pourtrayed, if we cannot graſp the ſubſtance; and it is pleaſing, after the ſurvey of ſo depraved a time, to conſider man under a leſs diſguſting form.

Filial piety, and obedience.

Examples of it.

Parental authority and filial reſpect ſeem to have ſurvived the extinction of general philanthropy, and to have been held in the higheſt honor, even by thoſe who did not affect a regard for any other ſpecies of reputation. Francis of Montmorency, eldeſt ſon to the conſtable of that name, long after he had attained to manhood, and when married to the natural daughter of Henry the Second; yet addreſſes his father with a humility and reverence, which recals the idea of the primitive and patriarchal ages of the world (261). Margaret of Valois herſelf, though one of the moſt diſſolute women who ever diſgraced her ſex, far from being deficient on this point, appears to have ſcrupulouſly

Margaret of Valois.

(261) Manuſc. de Bethune, N° 8673, cited in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 105.

fulfilled

fulfilled her filial duties. We may see in her own Memoirs, with what awe and implicit deference, she receives and obeys the orders of her mother, even after she became queen of Navarre, and seemed to be by that circumstance, emancipated, in a great measure, from a state of subjection. The duchess of Lorrain, her elder sister, expresses similar sentiments towards Catherine of Medicis; who uses the most authoritative language, and is obeyed in silence, without a murmur (262). "I have always "preserved," says she, in another part of her Memoirs, "that respect to the queen, my mother, "that whenever I have been with her, whether "married or single, I never went to any place, "without having asked her leave, and obtained her "permission (263)." We trace in Sully, Chiverny, Tavannes, and D'Aubigné, the same humility on one side, and the same exertion of parental authority on the other.

Courage, and contempt of death.

Courage, which is not improperly defined to be rather a happy quality than a virtue, has been found in every period, and among every people. It has, notwithstanding, from the effect of natural, political, or moral causes, been heightened, or depressed; and we do not consider the degenerate Romans under Constantine and Justinian, as equal to the legions who subjected Macedonia, Carthage, and Gaul. The spirit of chivalry raised and sublimed the valor of the Gothic nations, who over-ran Europe in the middle ages. Under the last princes of Valois, continued scenes of slaughter and civil war had produced a familiarity with death, and bereaved it of the terrors which accompany the last act of life. Men became accustomed to contem-

Causes of it.

(262) Memoires de Marguerite, à Paris, 1658, p. 19 and 36.
(263) Ibid. p. 54.

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plate it under every form, and to regard it as continually imminent, or probable. They looked on it with a ſteady eye, and awaited it with a ſort of ſullen intrepidity, whether on the ſcaffold, in a dungeon, or in a field of battle. Education, habit, and enthuſiaſm, all conſpired to ſteel the mind, and to pronounce a diſregard of peril and diſſolution.

Genius of the age.

D'Aubigné.

D'Aubigné tells us, that in the year 1560, when he was ſcarcely nine years old, his father carried him to Paris. On their way through Amboiſe, they beheld the heads of the Hugonots, who had been recently executed for the conſpiracy againſt the Guiſes, planted upon the poles, and which were ſtill eaſy to be recognized. "At ſo lamentable a "ſight, my father," ſays he, "was deeply mov-"ed, and his agitation was viſible on his counte-"nance. When we had left the town, he laid his "hand upon my head, and addreſſing me, ſaid; "My child, thou muſt not ſpare thy head after "mine, to avenge thoſe honorable chiefs whoſe "remains thou haſt juſt ſeen; and if thou ſpare "thyſelf, thou ſhalt have my malediction (264)." We may naturally conceive what muſt have been the effect on a young mind, of ſuch an exhortation. D'Aubigné's whole life was paſſed in fulfilling his father's inſtructions. We muſt not imagine that the romantic honor inſpired by chivalry, was totally extinct, even in the times which we have reviewed. Some traces of it appear, and excite admiration. D'Aubigné ſays, that when on the point of commencing a ſkirmiſh, having remarked, that no other of his comrades was covered with mail on their arms, except himſelf; he diſdained an advantage which was not common to the whole

Traces of the ſpirit of chivalry.

(264) D'Aub. Mémoires, p. 5 and 6.

troop,

troop, and immediately threw away thoſe pieces of defenſive armor (265). CHAP. VI.

Friendſhip. Friendſhip ſeems to have been cultivated with uncommon ardor, and the demonſtrations of it to have been frequently carried even to a pitch of exceſs, during the time under our conſideration. The duke of Alençon, flying from Paris, in 1575, firſt clothed himſelf in the doublet of his unfortunate favorite and friend La Mole, whoſe attachment had conducted him to a ſcaffold, under Charles the Ninth (266). It was not uncommon to neglect every ſpecies of dreſs or ornament, and even to allow the hair and beard to grow, in ſign of regret for the temporary loſs or abſence of a companion. When D'Aubigné, in 1583, was diſpatched by the king of Navarre, to demand reparation of Henry the Third, for the treatment ſhewn to the wife of the one, and the ſiſter of the other; St. Gelais, his friend, penetrated with grief, fell into a ſtate of dejection, and permitted his appearance to diſplay the melancholy which he felt at the event. " On my return," ſays D'Aubigné, " to Pau, the king was walking in " the garden of the caſtle; and he no ſooner " ſaw me, than he inſtantly ſaid to one of his " gentlemen; Go, tell St. Gelais to ſhave him- " ſelf and to cut his hair, ſince his friend is ſafely " arrived (267)." Romantic teſtimonies of grief.

This liſt of virtues, ſhort as it may appear, includes all thoſe which can be properly ſaid to diſcriminate and characterize the age. There are, however, many ſofter features, of a doubtful or equivocal nature, which neceſſarily, from their minuteneſs, eſcape the reſearch of hiſtory. It Concluſion. Reflexions.

(265) D'Aub. Memoires, p. 61.
(266) Vie de Marg. p. 164.
(267) D'Aub. Memoires, p. 99.

ſuffices

CHAP. VI. suffices to have marked the outline with an impartial hand; and to have endeavoured to convey a juſt, though an imperfect and defective idea, of a period of time, which, notwithſtanding the vices that deformed and debaſed it, will ever, from the magnitude of the events with which it is crouded, powerfully awaken the attention of the moſt remote poſterity.

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END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.